United Nations A/C.1/51/PV.15

General Assembly
Fifty-first session

Official Records

First Committee
15th Meeting
Wednesday, 6 November 1996, 10 a.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Sychou ..... (Belarus)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda items 60, 61, 63-81 *(continued)*

Introduction and consideration of draft resolutions submitted on all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Congo to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/51/l.15.

Mr. Bakala (Congo) (*interpretation from French*): As the representative of the country currently presiding over the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, it is my honour to introduce the draft resolution, contained in document A/C.1/51/L.15, on regional confidence-building measures.

As I speak in this Committee, the subregion of Central Africa is again the theatre of deadly confrontations that threaten to undo the efforts made at several levels to promote trust and to establish peace and sustainable development in that part of the continent.

As all representatives here are aware, the subregion of Central Africa, which has more than 75 million inhabitants and is replete with natural resources, has long been shaken by conflicts of every sort. These conflicts have not only cost the lives of millions of people, but have also hampered real development and exacerbated tension and distrust among the countries of the subregion.

Mindful of this situation and recognizing that the responsibility for ensuring peace and security in their countries is primarily their own, the Governments of the countries of Central Africa have undertaken a series of actions to strengthen confidence and restore stability throughout the subregion. It is within this context, and bearing in mind the primary role of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security, that they solicited the assistance of our world Organization.

In response, in 1992 the General Assembly established the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa as a forum for cooperation among the countries of the subregion.

Since its establishment, as reflected in the various reports of the Secretary-General, the member countries of the Committee have adopted a series of measures aimed at strengthening trust both within and among States.

Among these measures, the most important involve the following: the adoption of a typology of crises and conflicts in Central Africa, enabling us objectively to identify threats to peace in the subregion within States or in their respective relations; the establishment of specialized units for peacekeeping operations in the armies of each member State, so as to facilitate their participation in future peacekeeping operations in the subregion — and it should be noted that the first training seminars for these units was held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, from 9 to 17 September 1996; the adoption of the Brazzaville Declaration on Cooperation for Peace and Security in Central Africa, which, *inter alia*, seeks to strengthen cooperation among the countries of the subregion and the organs of the United Nations system in order to harmonize their joint action for peace and progress in Central Africa; the convening of the First Summit of

96-86706 (E)

This record contains the original texts of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

Heads of State and Government of the countries of the subregion in Yaoundé on 8 July 1996 and the adoption of a final Declaration, in which they commit to undertaking a certain number of concrete actions — see document A/51/274; the signing by the Heads of State and Government of Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Sao Tome and Principe and Zaire of a Non-Aggression Pact between the States of Central Africa. The signed text of this Pact was officially submitted on 23 October 1996 by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to Mr. Paul Biya, President of the Republic of Cameroon and current President of the Organization of African Unity, whose country is the depository of the covenant; the decision of the Heads of State and Government to promote systems of participatory governance as a way to prevent conflicts in Central Africa. In this regard, the member countries of the Committee decided to hold a subregional conference at Brazzaville, Congo, in January 1997, on the topic "Democratic institutions and peace in Central Africa."

The tragic events unfolding in Zaire jeopardize the major steps I have just enumerated, although they do not call them into question. On the other hand, these events demonstrate the relevance and scope of the work of the Committee, which more than ever deserves the support of the international community. It is appropriate here to reiterate the thanks of the countries of the subregion to the international community for its tireless support, without which the Committee would have had great difficulty in achieving the important steps we are commanding today.

Recently, the Committee has been forced to decrease the pace of its activities, reducing the number of its ministerial meetings from two to one a year, because of the financial crisis of the United Nations. These meetings make cooperation possible between senior officials on security questions within the Member countries of the Committee.

Thus, last April, the eighth meeting of the Committee, held in Yaoundé, made it possible for the Ministers of the 11 member countries to cooperate in preparing the First Summit of Heads of State and Government. We believe that it is important to increase this type of meeting, which, by helping to develop and strengthen high-level personal contacts, contribute to establishing and promoting mutual trust among States.

Furthermore, the recent challenges to peace and security that our States are confronting today require not only the continuation and even augmentation of assistance from the international community, but also the restructuring of the United Nations services, with the goal of enhancing the efficacy of their actions.

Apart from the services of the secretariat of the Committee, whose role and expertise remain useful for carrying out the Committee's programme of work, the new crises in the subregion prompt us to aim for a better harmonization and rationalization of the services of the Secretary-General on policies regarding peace and security in the subregion of Central Africa.

As is clear in paragraph 8 of our draft resolution, the initiatives taken by the Heads of State and Government of the subregion will be better and fully implemented only with the help of a Secretariat structure able to respond in a united and effective manner to these demands. It is in this context that we should understand the request to the Secretary-General, contained in paragraph 15 of the draft resolution, which is essentially the same as paragraph 10 of resolution 50/71 B, adopted by consensus at the fiftieth session of the General Assembly.

The draft resolution has two basic goals: first, to reflect the progress made in the Advisory Committee; and secondly, to solicit the continued support of the Assembly for the efforts of member States of the Committee, particularly in the face of the new dangers in the subregion.

Let us now consider draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.15 paragraph by paragraph. The preamble contains the same basic elements as resolution 50/71 B of 12 December 1995, which was adopted by consensus.

Turning to the operative section, the first three paragraphs are likewise similar to the text of the previous resolution. Paragraph 4 welcomes the fact that the Committee's programme of work has led since 1992 to specific actions and measures. This point is also reflected in the Secretary-General's annual reports on the work of the Committee.

Paragraph 5 takes note of the historic holding of the First Summit of States and Government of the Countries Members of the Committee. This Summit, which was held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, on 8 July 1996, as an adjunct to the Organization of African Unity Summit, was the first of its kind to bring together the leaders of the subregions to consider sensitive security questions.

Paragraphs 6 and 7 are concerned with the Non-Aggression Pact. The General Assembly, in previous

resolutions, welcomed the adoption of this Pact in 1993 and called for its signature and entry into force.

Paragraph 6 welcomes with satisfaction the signature of the Pact this year. In the same paragraph, the General Assembly reaffirms its conviction that the Pact is likely to contribute to the prevention of conflicts and further confidence-building in the Central African subregion.

In connection with paragraph 7, we would inform delegations that nine countries out of the 11 member States of the Committee have already signed the Non-Aggression Pact. These nine countries are Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Sao Tome and Principe and Zaire. Paragraph 7 invites the countries that have not yet signed the Pact to do so and encourages all member States to expedite its ratification.

Paragraph 8 welcomes with satisfaction the important steps contained in the final Declaration adopted at the conclusion of the First Summit of Heads of State and Government of the countries members of the Committee. We would voice the hope here that the General Assembly and the international community will lend their full support to the implementation of these measures.

The first part of paragraph 9 expresses the support that is shared by the international community regarding the promotion and strengthening of the democratic process as a means to prevent conflicts.

The second part of this same paragraph welcomes the decision to hold a subregional conference at Brazzaville, Congo, in January 1997, on the topic "Democratic institutions and peace in Central Africa". The member States of the Committee have already begun to prepare for that conference and I take this opportunity once again to call upon the States Members of the United Nations and all intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to lend their support and make this important conference a success.

Paragraphs 10 to 12 deal with the first training seminar for special units for peacekeeping operations, which took place from 9 to 17 September 1996 at Yaoundé, Cameroon. We wish to stress the need to continue this type of training programme, which makes it possible for our respective States to strengthen their ability to take a more active part in the peacekeeping operations in the subregion. To the Secretary-General, we express our gratitude for the steps taken to organize this first training seminar and we reiterate our gratitude to the Government of Japan for its contribution, which made it possible to hold that seminar.

Paragraphs 13 and 14 are of crucial importance. Indeed, during this financial crisis in our Organization, we cannot stress enough the well-foundedness of voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund, making it possible fully to implement the programme of work of the Committee.

We would like sincerely to thank the States that have contributed to the Fund and those that intend to. Our thanks go as well to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and, more specifically, to the Department of Political Affairs and the Centre for Disarmament Affairs, for their constant support of the Committee, which the General Assembly in paragraph 15 of the draft resolution requests the Secretary-General to continue to provide.

In paragraph 16, the General Assembly requests the Secretary-General to submit at its fifty-second session a report on the implementation of this resolution. In paragraph 17, the final paragraph of this draft, it decides to include the item entitled "Regional confidence-building measures" in the provisional agenda at its fifty-second session.

Before I conclude my statement, I should like to express, on behalf of all the sponsors of this draft, our hope that this draft resolution will be adopted in due course by consensus, as was the case at the last session.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Colombia to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.14.

Mr. García (Colombia): It is an honour for Colombia to introduce, on behalf of the members of the non-aligned countries, the draft resolution on the observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control, contained in document A/C.1/51/L.14.

In regard to this draft resolution, the Non-Aligned Movement considers that it is very useful to continue working within the First Committee on the ideas contained in the resolution on this matter, submitted by the Movement last year and adopted by a very large majority of delegations.

This year, the proposal intends to be more comprehensive, including references not only to the Biological and Chemical Weapons Conventions, but also to

other existing international agreements in the field of disarmament and arms control — such as the Antarctic Treaty and the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Seabed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof — and subjects linked to the preservation of the world's environment, such as the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes and the issue of any use of nuclear or radioactive wastes as a radiological method of warfare.

The Non-Aligned Movement will be in touch with interested delegations in order to work closely with them in an attempt to achieve the possibility of consensus on this draft resolution, to which we attach great importance.

Over two years of hard work and negotiations came to a close on 3 May this year when the Review Conference of the States Parties to the 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons adopted its Final Report. The Chairman of the Review Conference, Ambassador Johan Molander, reported to this Committee a few weeks ago on the successful conclusion of the Conference. He also recalled the new provisions of the strengthened Protocol II, so I will not repeat them here. Suffice it to say that the Review Conference made considerable progress by means of restrictions and partial prohibitions on anti-personnel landmines and of banning a completely new type of weapon, the blinding laser weapons.

The purpose of the 1980 Convention is to place constraints upon the conduct of war. The Convention and its annexed Protocols constitute an important part of international law in armed conflicts by restricting the use of certain conventional weapons.

Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.40 welcomes the fact that additional States have ratified or accepted the Convention. So far, the Convention has entered into force for 62 States. However, accession to these instruments must ultimately be universal. Consequently, the draft resolution urgently calls upon all States that have not yet done so to take all measures to become parties as soon as possible, to the Convention and its Protocols.

Under the new rules of the amended Protocol II on anti-personnel mines, none of the current crisis situations relating to landmines could have occurred at such a scale. In the draft resolution, the General Assembly would call on the States Parties to express their consent to be bound by the Protocol with a view to its entry into force as soon as possible, and it would also commend the Protocol to all States with a view to achieving the widest possible adherence to this instrument. If implemented, these rules would reduce or eliminate the risks to civilians and non-combatants and would definitely save lives. This would make a major humanitarian difference.

The draft resolution also commends the Protocol on Blinding Laser Weapons. The new Protocol prohibits the employment of laser weapons specifically designed to cause permanent blindness, as well as the transfer of any such weapons to any State or non-State entity. For the first time, a weapon developed and produced in prototype has been banned before it was even deployed.

On behalf of the sponsors, I express the hope that draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.40 will be adopted without a vote.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Canada to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.34.

Mr. Sinclair (Canada): It is a great honour for Canada to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/51/L.34, entitled "The role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields". It is particularly welcome that we can do so on behalf of our joint sponsor on this text, Brazil, and also on behalf of our co-sponsors: Austria, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Chile, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Poland, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Republic of Korea, South Africa and Sweden.

We believe that this is a very simple and straightforward text and a very simple and straightforward draft resolution. The basic premise is to encourage bilateral and multilateral dialogue so as to promote international understanding and cooperation on the basis of the concepts identified in the preambular paragraphs of this draft: that scientific and technological developments could have both civilian and military applications and that progress and science and technology for civilian applications need to be maintained and encouraged.

There are two operational components to this draft resolution. The first is to ensure the implementation of the relevant commitments already undertaken under international legal instruments and the second is to explore ways and means of further developing international legal rules on transfers of high technology with military applications.

This text does not attempt to resolve the differences that we know exist among delegations in this room. It does not take a particular position on the answers to these questions. It merely encourages and invites Member States to enhance bilateral and multilateral dialogue on these important issues. We would hope that, as a neutral, politically inclined endorsement of dialogue, this text will be supported by all delegations and be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Lamaziere (Brazil): I would like to express the support of the Brazilian delegation for draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.34 on the role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields, which has just been introduced by the representative of Canada.

The history of the draft resolution goes back to the four years between 1991 and 1994, during which the United Nations Disarmament Commission considered an agenda item with the same title. As many present here may remember, the Commission came very close to adopting consensual guidelines on the role of science and technology and international security, with the emphasis on transfers of high technology with military applications, the so-called dual-use technologies. It is very unfortunate that the Disarmament Commission could not agree on the draft guidelines at that time. The issue of transfers of dual-use technology and its implications for non-proliferation, disarmament and technological developments is one on which agreement between supplier and recipient countries is essential. Had those guidelines been adopted then, developed and developing countries would now have a more solid base for dialogue on this crucial issue.

Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.34 serves the useful purpose of reminding the international community of the need for dialogue on this issue. It does not present the point of view of only one group of countries, but rather provides an invitation to dialogue among all. We recognize the difficulties that have impeded agreement on the subject and that is why the sponsors, Brazil and Canada, have, since the fiftieth session of the General Assembly, stripped the text of its substantive elements, with the exception of the essential parametres of the issue.

With the exception of the biannualization of the item, this draft resolution has the same text as resolution 50/63, which was adopted by a vote of 157 to none, with 9 abstentions. We consider that this draft resolution serves the interest of all countries without exception and we invite those that have abstained for historical reasons to allow it to be adopted without a vote this year. Such a result would signal a welcome willingness to engage in dialogue on the important topic of transfers of dual-use technology in the context of international security.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Malaysia to introduce draft resolution A/C.1.51/L.37.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): My delegation is pleased on behalf of the sponsors to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.37, entitled "Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons", pursuant to its request to include this sub-item in the agenda of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly under item 71, "General and complete disarmament".

It may be recalled that by its resolution 49/75 K, adopted on 15 December 1994, the General Assembly, pursuant to Article 96, paragraph 1, of the Charter, requested the International Court of Justice urgently to render an advisory opinion on the following question:

> "Is the threat or use of nuclear weapons in any circumstance permitted under international law?"

Written statements were submitted to the Court by 28 Member States, and in the course of public sittings held from 30 October to 15 November 1995, the Court heard oral statements from 22 countries. Malaysia was one of those States which presented both written and oral statements to the Court.

At a public sitting on 8 July 1996, the International Court of Justice recognized for the first time in history that the threat or use of nuclear weapons is generally contrary to the rules of international law applicable in armed conflict, and in particular the principles and rules of humanitarian law, also recognizing that there exists an obligation for all States to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament.

It is not my intention to elaborate on the Court's Opinion, which is well understood. It suffices for me to say that the pronouncement made by the highest international legal authority is of historic importance and cannot be dismissed. It is important in that it has set the legal parameter whereby the use of nuclear weapons indeed ignores customary international law and international treaties such as the Geneva and Hague Conventions. It is important also for the reason that it points out the direction of international action in addressing this issue, upon which

hinges the very survival of mankind. The threat to its survival by the existence of nuclear weapons grants the international community the right to take a position on the legality of such weapons.

The General Assembly had requested the Advisory Opinion in order to assist its activities in the area of nuclear disarmament. The rendering of this Opinion by the International Court of Justice has a direct impact on the activities of the General Assembly and on the policies and obligations of Member States in the area of nuclear disarmament.

My delegation believes that the General Assembly should acknowledge the Court for rendering an opinion in response to the its request. The draft resolution before this Committee seeks to do that. It, *inter alia*, expresses the appreciation of the General Assembly to the Court for responding to the request made by the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. It takes note of the Court's Opinion and underlines its unanimous conclusion that

> "There exists an obligation for all States to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control." *(A/C.1/51/L.37, para. 3)*

More importantly, it calls upon all States to fulfil that obligation immediately by commencing multilateral negotiations in 1997 leading to an early conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention prohibiting the development, production, testing, deployment, stockpiling, transfer, threat or use of nuclear weapons and providing for their elimination.

To date the draft resolution has been sponsored by some 30 Member States: Afghanistan, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Fiji, Ghana, Guyana, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Lesotho, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malawi, Mali, the Marshall Islands, Mexico, Mongolia, Myanmar, Namibia, Nigeria, Niger, the Philippines, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Zimbabwe and Malaysia. To these delegations my delegation wishes to express its sincere thanks and appreciation. In sponsoring the resolution these Member States share Malaysia's conviction that the Court's Opinion is an important and positive development in the nuclear disarmament process, and should be built on. It would not be enough merely to take note of it, or even to welcome it, and then to forget about it. The learned judges of the International Court of Justice have made it very clear that the international community has not only an obligation to pursue negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects in accordance with article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), but also to bring to a conclusion such negotiations.

The call for the commencement of negotiations leading to the conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention is a necessary one. It is necessary because the existence of a legal obligation would require early, indeed immediate, action. The existence today of tens of thousands of nuclear weapons in the arsenals of the nuclear-weapon States, 28 years after the signing of the NPT, is a sobering reminder that negotiations on nuclear disarmament in all its aspects have been carried out neither in good faith nor in earnest. In the days of the cold war the heightened tension between East and West was blamed for the lack of progress in nuclear disarmament. With the demise of that destructive phase of human history there is no longer that excuse. On the contrary, the current constructive phase in international relations would argue for more serious and concerted efforts on the part of the international community to strive for more concrete achievements in the field of nuclear disarmament. This opportunity should not be lost to the international community. It should be grasped, and grasped firmly, as it might not present itself again.

This draft resolution seeks to do just that. It serves to remind the international community of this solemn obligation and urges it to commence the process of negotiations which would lead to the total elimination of nuclear weapons. The waiting period has been far too long — a quarter of a century too long. It is now time for serious action. By joining the NPT in overwhelming numbers, the non-nuclear-weapon States struck a bargain with the nuclear-weapon States whereby in exchange for giving up the nuclear option by the non-nuclear-weapon States there would be negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to ending the nuclear-arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament. In May 1995 this bargain was renewed; indeed, a second trade-off was made when, in exchange for the indefinite extension of the NPT without a vote, the nuclear-weapon States reaffirmed their commitments as stated in article VI of the Treaty to pursue in good faith negotiations on effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament and their determined pursuit of systematic and progressive efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally, with the ultimate goal of eliminating those weapons.

The NPT addressed the issue of nuclear proliferation, which for the most part has been successfully curbed thanks to the adherence to the Treaty by the non-nuclear-weapon States. The time has now come for the issue of the elimination of nuclear weapons, which is an equally important, indeed integral, part of the NPT process, to be addressed in a serious fashion by the international community. Unless this issue is addressed, and addressed promptly, I am afraid the entire bargain or trade-off will be questioned by many non-nuclear-weapon States parties, a few of which have already expressed their unhappiness and are beginning to question, both privately and publicly, the purpose of their continued adherence to what is clearly a lopsided Treaty which favours the nuclear-weapon States. If this trend were to continue, it would only undermine the integrity of the Treaty and jeopardize its prospects for attaining universality.

It cannot be denied that bilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament have a place on the disarmament agenda and, in fact, have contributed significantly to the reduction of nuclear weapons, as evidenced by the START I and START II processes, which should logically lead to early negotiations for a START III. However, as the Court's Opinion has clearly stated, this does not absolve the nuclear-weapon States from their obligation to conduct multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament in all its aspects, involving other members of the international community which have an equal responsibility. The Court has unanimously affirmed that the obligation to negotiate on nuclear disarmament in all its aspects belongs to all States, both nuclear and non-nuclear, and that this obligation includes bringing the negotiations to a conclusion. It is clear that the obligation to negotiate on nuclear disarmament exists independently and is not linked to negotiations on a treaty on general and complete disarmament.

My delegation believes that the objective of commencing serious multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament leading to the elimination of nuclear weapons is one that no Member State in all earnestness could oppose, for, to do so would be to justify the continued existence of nuclear weapons, with all the attendant risks to global security and human survival. It would also be to deny the cherished aspirations of humanity for a world entirely free of these weapons of mass destruction. It is for that reason that the Canberra Commission, which was set up by the former Australian Government, was persuaded

> "that immediate and determined efforts need to be made to rid the world of nuclear weapons and the threat they pose to it".

It regarded the proposition that nuclear weapons can be retained in perpetuity and never used as utterly incredible and agreed that

> "the only complete defence ... is the elimination of nuclear weapons and the assurance that they will never be produced again".

The views of the Canberra Commission are particularly pertinent considering the fact that its members, included leading authorities on nuclear disarmament, some of whom had earlier in their careers participated actively in formulating the nuclear doctrines and strategies of their countries.

On the basis of these arguments, my delegation commends draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.37 for the consideration, sponsorship or support of all delegations that share these sentiments and are opposed to the threat or use of nuclear weapons, and that would like to ensure that concrete and effective steps are taken now to pave the way for their total elimination within a realistic time-frame, in the interest of ensuring the well-being and survival of humanity.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of India to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.20/Rev.1.

Ms. Ghose (India): I have the honour to introduce today a draft resolution entitled "The role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament", as contained in document A/C.1/51/L.20/Rev.1, on behalf of the delegations of Bhutan, Costa Rica, Cuba, Guyana, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kenya, Lesotho, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Nepal, Nigeria, Singapore, Sri Lanka and India. This draft resolution is one which we, the sponsors, believe addresses an issue of great importance not only for countries seeking to promote the social and economic well-being of their peoples, but also for the international community as a whole.

It is widely acknowledged that the developmental needs of countries today require infusions of technology; technology, which in some cases, may also have military applications. We recognize that the development and transfers of such dual-use and high technologies with possible military applications need to be monitored and

regulated in the interests of international security. We also recognize, however, that the application of such technologies for civilian and peaceful purposes needs to be not only maintained and encouraged, but indeed promoted.

There are therefore two distinct aspects to the issue as seen from the point of view of this draft resolution, first, that the development of technology should, as far as possible, in the interest of international security, be directed towards civilian rather than military applications. To quote from a document to which I will refer later:

> "Technology by itself does not threaten anyone ... It is also unrealistic to believe that the process of technological innovation can be frozen to prevent its military application. However, the very technologies capable of improving existing weapons systems can also often be used in their limitation, destruction or conversion. A few of the many areas in which militarily capable technologies could actually promote rather than threaten international security are the use of communication technologies for advanced warning of impending conflicts, the employment of remote-sensing techniques for verification and the development of appropriate techniques for ecologically safe methods of weapons disposal." *(A/45/568, para. 13)*

The second aspect of this issue, as we see it, is to make dual-use and high technologies available on a regulated yet non- discriminatory basis to countries that wish to utilize them for civilian and peaceful purposes. This regulation, however, cannot in our view, be through the ad hoc export regimes that have been and continue to be set up, which in effect are no more than exclusive groupings of countries that limit the exchanges of such technologies among themselves while denying access to others that may require them for developmental purposes. Such ad hoc regimes tend to become commercial and economic barriers to normal trade and therefore to the social and economic development of States, particularly developing countries.

On the other hand, as we know only too well, such regimes have not been very effective in achieving their stated goal: the control of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In the view of the sponsors, the regulation of the flows of such dual-use and high technology should, to be effective and efficient, be internationally applicable on the basis of multilaterally negotiated and universally accepted guidelines. In 1990, in implementation of several General Assembly resolutions, a high-level conference on new trends in science and technology and their implications for international peace and security was held at Sendai in Japan. The conference was attended by scientists, strategic analysts, arms limitation and disarmament experts, politicians and diplomats from over 20 countries. The outcome of this conference is set out in the report of the Secretary-General in document A/45/568 of 17 October 1990, a document from which I quoted earlier.

This was a useful first step in examining the issue. Unfortunately, there has been little or no follow-up at the intergovernmental level. Efforts to start or continue a dialogue on the subject are today stymied in almost every forum, whether in the Preparatory Commission for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the ad hoc working group on biological weapons or even in our sole deliberative forum, the Disarmament Commission. In our view, the 1990 report now needs to be updated and further developed in order to take cognizance of the very significant developments that have taken place since that time. We expect that the updated report will contain recommendations which could assist States to address the issue of multilaterally negotiating universal guidelines monitoring the development and regulating the transfer of dual-use and high technologies.

The draft resolution therefore requests the Secretary-General to undertake this task and to present a report not later than the fifty-third session of the General Assembly, in 1998. If there are any financial implications to this request, we trust that the Secretariat will make all efforts, if necessary as with the Sendai conference, to meet the expenditure from extra-budgetary resources to carry out this task in the next two years.

This is an important and, we are aware, extremely sensitive subject. This should not however prevent us from making cautious progress towards the goal, with which few can find fault. We are aware of the other draft resolution with the same title. I listened with great care to its introduction today by the two leading sponsors, and to the proposal to hold a multilateral dialogue. That is an idea which we support.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Sri Lanka to introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/51/L.3 and A/C.1/51/L.13.

Mr. Goonetilleke (Sri Lanka): On behalf of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), permit me to introduce the draft

resolution contained in A/C.1/51/L.3 on the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and its Preparatory Committee.

As members are well aware, the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons adopted three decisions — decision 1 on strengthening the review process for the Treaty; decision 2 on principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation; and decision 3 on the extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons — and a resolution on the Middle East.

The General Assembly, by its resolution 50/70 Q of 12 December 1995, took note of the three decisions and the adoption of the resolution by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference.

States Parties to the Treaty have decided to hold review conferences every five years and, accordingly, the next Review Conference is scheduled to be held in the year 2000. In paragraph 3 of decision 1, the Review and Extension Conference has also taken a decision to convene the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee in 1997.

The purpose of the Preparatory Committee meetings, referred to in paragraph 3 of decision 1, is amplified in paragraph 4:

> "to consider principles, objectives and ways in order to promote the full implementation of the Treaty, as well as its universality, and to make recommendations thereon to the Review Conference." *(NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I), Annex, p. 8)*

The same paragraph also states that:

> "These meetings should also make the procedural preparations for the next Review Conference." *(ibid.)*

In the circumstances, it is clear that the meetings of the Preparatory Committee should undertake both substantive and procedural work for the next Review Conference.

The draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/51/L.3, which has been reissued for technical reasons, is purely a procedural one intended to fix the dates of the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee, which is now scheduled to take place from 7 to 18 April 1997 in New York. Paragraph 2 is intended to request the Secretary-General of the United Nations to render the necessary assistance and to provide services as may be required for the 2000 Review Conference. As members are aware, the review process is not a United Nations function. Services are provided by the Organization upon request by the Parties to the Treaty and at their cost. The two operative paragraphs are therefore designed to secure conference facilities for the 2000 Review Conference.

A meeting of the States parties to the Treaty was held on 18 October in New York to consider the draft resolution. The parties to the Treaty, having considered the text, agreed that it be submitted to the General Assembly, through the First Committee, for adoption.

As the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/51/L.3 is applicable to the 185 Parties to the Treaty, it is the hope of my delegation that it will be adopted by the First Committee without a vote.

Sri Lanka is also pleased to introduce the draft resolution contained in A/C.1/51/L.13 on the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, which has been submitted by Colombia on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The Declaration has engaged the attention of the international community ever since the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 2832 (XXVI) in 1971, for the implementation of which an Ad Hoc Committee was established in the following year. Eight years later, in July 1979, the Meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States of the Indian Ocean was held, following which the Ad Hoc Committee moved into its next stage of work, strengthened by the expansion of its membership.

Due to its strategic and economic importance, the Indian Ocean has been a focus of attention for many centuries. During the colonial period, several European Powers collided with each other with the intention of carving out territories belonging to the littoral and hinterland States existing during that time, thus adversely affecting the development process and the security of the entire region.

The post-colonial era did not change the situation for the better, as the Indian Ocean region once again became an object of great-Power rivalry at the height of the cold war.

The intensity of the cold war, *inter alia*, prevented the Ad Hoc Committee from gaining much headway over the

past two decades. During that period, the wars in Afghanistan and between Iran and Iraq and the conflict in the Horn of Africa were cited as reasons by some members of the Security Council and the major maritime users that were members of the Ad Hoc Committee for their inability to reach agreement in the Ad Hoc Committee.

Today everybody tends to agree that the great-Power rivalry that hindered the work of the Ad Hoc Committee belongs to the past. The flames of conflict that engulfed some parts of the region in the past few decades have been smothered. A new era of international political relations has dawned, which, if consolidated fully, should bring an era of stability and prosperity to the countries in the region. Some preliminary steps have already been taken by the countries in the region in the sphere of economic development. These measures would bring the desired results if peace and security in the region could be secured and maintained. It is for this reason that the Ad Hoc Committee has repeatedly expressed its conviction that the participation of all permanent members of the Security Council, as well as the major maritime users of the Indian Ocean, in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee is important and would greatly facilitate the development of a mutually beneficial dialogue to advance peace, security and stability in the Indian Ocean region. This view has been reflected in paragraph 2 of the draft resolution.

There is a fear that the establishment of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean would result in hindering the freedom of navigation in the Indian Ocean and overflights. Sri Lanka wishes to confirm that there is no intention on the part of the members of the Ad Hoc Committee to impose such restrictions, which would be in contravention of obligations under such treaties as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Furthermore, the littoral and hinterland States certainly would not be seeking to contravene the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, particularly Article 51 thereof.

On the other hand, there is also a view that the Declaration, conceived during the height of the cold war, is out of date and, as such, irrelevant in the present context. It is the view of the non-aligned countries members of the Ad Hoc Committee that the United Nations should make use of the existing positive international climate to negotiate and reach agreement to preserve peace and security in this strategically and economically important region for all time. Such a measure could be described as preventive diplomacy, in other words; investing now for the future.

The Ad Hoc Committee has reached a crucial stage. After nearly a quarter of a century of its existence, a well-considered decision has to be taken on the future work of the Ad Hoc Committee. For that purpose, the Ad Hoc Committee is requested to hold a short session of a duration of not more than three days next year and then to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session. We believe that the participation of all permanent members of the Security Council and the major maritime users in such a session would provide an opportunity for a constructive dialogue and facilitate reaching a conclusion on the future work of the Ad Hoc Committee.

On behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Non-Aligned Movement, Sri Lanka would like to urge the members of the First Committee to support the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/51/L.13.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Sweden to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.40.

Mr. Bjarme (Sweden): I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.40 on the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects.

The sponsors of the draft resolution are Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Malta, Mongolia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the United Kingdom, the United States and my own country, Sweden.

We therefore hope that, as we had called for last year, there will be more consultations between delegations so that we could perhaps try and evolve a common position on this important subject in the future. We commend our draft resolution to the First Committee and we hope that it will attract the support of a very large number of delegations.

I would like now to make one comment on draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.37, which has just been introduced by the delegation of Malaysia. My delegation will be speaking on the nuclear cluster later, when draft resolutions in that cluster are being considered, but today after its

introduction, we would like to state for the record that we, as a sponsor of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/51/L.37, do not see this as in any way changing India's stand on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, notwithstanding the references to that Treaty and the Review Conference in two of the preambular paragraphs. Our sponsorship of this very important draft resolution, so ably introduced today, reflects our sincere support of the objectives of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/51/L.37.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Japan to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.17.

Mrs. Kurokochi (Japan): I would like to start by recalling two resolutions entitled "Nuclear Disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons", which were adopted by the General Assembly with wide support in 1994 and again in 1995. On both occasions, Japan took the initiative in presenting the draft resolution in accordance with its consistent position on nuclear disarmament. Japan firmly believes that we must make persistent efforts for the ultimate goal of eliminating all nuclear weapons and that this goal should be achieved through the implementation of various concrete and realistic measures.

In view of the importance of further promoting nuclear disarmament, Japan has decided to submit a draft resolution under the same title again this year, as contained in document A/C.1/51/L.17. This draft resolution is basically a follow-up to those adopted in previous years. The substantively new elements are as follows.

First, in the seventh preambular paragraph, it welcomes the adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). No explanation is required for this addition, but I wish to point out that we value this Treaty as one of the concrete and realistic measures I mentioned that will lead to a world without nuclear weapons. Secondly, in paragraph 3 it calls upon all States parties to the NPT to make their best efforts for a smooth start of the strengthened NPT review process. We have added this paragraph because we regard the NPT review process as one of the most effective, realistic and solid frameworks for the promotion of nuclear disarmament. The principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons represent the very few existing commitments internationally agreed to by both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States, in addition to the legal obligations enshrined in article VI of the NPT.

I would like to take this opportunity to stress once again Japan's firm belief that nuclear-weapon States must not interpret the indefinite extension of the NPT decided upon in 1995 as an authorization for them to possess nuclear weapons forever. As the principles and objectives made clear, nuclear-weapon States have a commitment to pursue with determination the reduction and ultimately the elimination of those weapons. By supporting the indefinite extension of the NPT, non-nuclear-weapon States committed themselves to the permanent non-possession of nuclear weapons with the expectation that the nuclear-weapon States would in return make progress in nuclear disarmament.

Japan believes that this draft resolution, by calling for the determined pursuit by the nuclear-weapon States to reduce nuclear weapons with the aim of eliminating those weapons, can make an important contribution to our shared goal of achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. Japan hopes that the draft resolution will enjoy the widest possible support.

Before concluding, I would like to draw the attention of the Committee to the text as it appears in document A/C.1/51/L.17. The text requires a few minor corrections of a technical nature and, although we have communicated these corrections to the Secretariat, it seems that a revised document will not appear due to budgetary constraints. First, in the third preambular paragraph, the name of the treaty should begin, "Treaty on Further Reduction ... ". Secondly, in subparagraph (a) of the sixth preambular paragraph, the word "the", should be eliminated from the text "and the utmost restraint" because we would like the text to conform strictly to that of last year's resolution.

Mr. Calovski (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): I would like to make a few comments with regard to draft resolutions A/C.1/51/L.1 on expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament, A/C.1/51/L.5 on the report of the Disarmament Commission, A/C.1/51/L.17 on nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons, A/C.1/51/L.21 on bilateral nuclear arms negotiations and nuclear disarmament, and A/C.1/51/L.25 on the role of the Conference on Disarmament.

The main subject of all these texts is how disarmament negotiations should be organized and where they should take place. During last week's structured informal

discussion, the positions of the nuclear-weapon States and of the potential nuclear-weapon States were advanced and elaborated. There was nothing new, but it was interesting to hear them. Regrettably, we have not heard the position of the largest number of Member States — which I call the "silent-majority States" — which have no intention whatsoever of becoming nuclear-weapon States, but are extremely interested in seeing the process of nuclear disarmament achieve positive results. In their view, and in the view of my delegation, which is part of this very large group of countries, the positive results of nuclear disarmament are strengthening international security and international cooperation, which could have a positive impact on their national security and on their economic development. For these countries, the nuclear threat, practically speaking, does not exist. Our national security does not depend on nuclear weapons. We are, however, very interested in helping to bring about the end of the nuclear arms race and to see that the number of nuclear-weapon States does not increase.

For these reasons we strongly supported the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). For the silent-majority States, the most important concern is their national defence. Their intent is not a great number of weapons or large armies. With this in mind, they are paying much more attention to the quality and quantity of the weapons of the bigger States in their neighbourhoods than to the nuclear armament of the nuclear-weapon States. To speak plainly, much of the attention is paid to conventional weapons, to chemical and bacteriological weapons, and to the size and strength of the armies of neighbouring States. We are very keen to see endorsed and observed the principle that countries should be limited to the weapons necessary for national defence. Additional weapons should be the subject of bilateral or multilateral disarmament negotiations.

The position of the nuclear-weapon States not to negotiate nuclear disarmament with non-nuclear-weapon States in a multilateral forum is, to us, logical. At the same time, it is opportune and logical to expect the non-nuclear-weapon States, particularly the potential nuclear-weapon States, to insist on taking part in negotiations on nuclear disarmament. But when we discuss this topic we have to bear in mind the nature of the negotiations. And the nature of the negotiations is, in fact, a business and political affair. The participants in the negotiations have to put something on the negotiating table. The fact is that non-nuclear States and those that would like to become nuclear-weapon States, are not placing anything of importance on the negotiating table. The silent-majority States have nothing to put on the nuclear-disarmament negotiating table — except the concerns of mankind and the conscience of mankind. Given this situation, it is quite normal for some States to insist on participating in the negotiations on nuclear disarmament and for some other States to continue to refuse such requests.

In this state of affairs in our view, lies the problem of the Conference on Disarmament. This problem is not a new one. It has not been resolved in spite of many efforts in the past. The situation was just the same many years ago when I had the honour of being the President of the Conference on Disarmament. The Conference on Disarmament has no opportunity to make many choices at this moment. The only alternative is to face the new reality: to reform, and to get rid of the fiction that it is the only negotiating body, which it is only on paper. Without such reform, the Conference will not be able to escape its present difficult situation. The Conference succeeded in concluding the Chemical Weapons Convention and the CTBT, but as we see, the difficult situation has not been overcome.

We hold the view that the expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament is an urgent matter. There is no basis whatsoever for the members of the Conference on Disarmament to block the membership of other States Members of the United Nations that wish to become members of the Conference. Given today's globalization, it is not appropriate to speak of permanent members of the Conference on Disarmament, or to say that some Member States can be members of the Conference but some cannot. In the future the Conference should rid itself of outdated items. Its agenda should be drafted on the basis of the present demands of the international situation in the field of disarmament, and not on the demands of 10 or 20 years ago.

Let me take this opportunity to suggest that the Conference on Disarmament should start work on concluding a convention on the limitation of conventional weapons. In the negotiation of such a convention, all States could participate: all have something to put on the negotiating table. The positive effect of concluding such a convention on the security situation of the silent-majority States will be much greater than that of many agreements on nuclear disarmament.

In our view, the Conference on Disarmament has important things to do in the years to come. Its tasks will require the political will and readiness of its members. I hope that things will develop in that direction.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Mongolia, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.10.

Mr. Enkhsaikhan (Mongolia): I take pleasure in introducing — on behalf of Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Marshall Islands, Myanmar, Nepal, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Viet Nam and Mongolia — draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.10, entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific". In sponsoring the draft resolution, those countries are expressing their belief that the Kathmandu Centre for Peace and Disarmament is promoting an important trend in the complex Asia-Pacific region — a process of regional dialogue on disarmament and international security issues. This process, which has come to be known as the Kathmandu process, is, in our view contributing significantly towards the creation of greater awareness of disarmament issues, promoting the habit of dialogue in the region, and spreading global disarmament measures and principles into the Asia and Pacific region. The regional meetings organized by the Centre in 1996 in Kathmandu and Hiroshima played an important role in identifying pressing disarmament and security issues and exploring region-oriented responses.

The end of the cold war has given new dimensions to the disarmament and international-security agenda. The Asia-Pacific region, as one of the most complex and diverse regions of the world, is facing a challenging disarmament agenda in today's changed security environment. In these circumstances, the activities of the Kathmandu Centre for Peace and Disarmament have acquired greater importance by providing forums in which the regional concerns and issues related to global disarmament and security matters, as well as their interrelationships, are being discussed among the countries of the region. The sponsors of the draft resolution, as supporters of the activities of the Centre, welcome the report of the Secretary-General (A/51/445), in which he underscored that the mandate of the Centre not only remains valid but is even more relevant today in the changed international environment.

We commend the Centre for its useful activities in encouraging regional and subregional dialogue to enhance openness, transparency and confidence-building. We consider it important that continued efforts be made to further intensify the Centre's activities and enlarge the area of discussions, by, *inter alia*, adding new urgent issues for in-depth discussion, perhaps including some new areas in the Asia-Pacific region, such as the Central Asian subregion.

While expressing our gratitude to the countries that have been supporting the Centre both financially and morally, the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.10 once again appeal to Member States, particularly those within the Asia-Pacific region, as well as to international governmental and non-governmental organizations and foundations, to continue to make voluntary contributions in order to strengthen the programme of activities of the Centre. The support of the international community, as well as continued cooperation on the part of the United Nations Secretariat, are essential to furthering the activities of the Centre. The sponsors of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/51/L.10 hope that, like similar texts in the past, the draft resolution will enjoy the support of all Member States.

Before concluding, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the United Nations Centre for Disarmament Affairs and the Regional Centre for the material that they have made available to delegations on the results of the workshop on the experience of the Asia-Pacific region with the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. We are convinced that other delegations, like mine, will find this material not only interesting but also quite useful.

Mr. Bahador Thapa (Nepal): My delegation is speaking as one of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.10 on the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, which was just introduced by the representative of Mongolia. Last year, through the efforts of the then Chairman of the First Committee, His Excellency Ambassador Luvsangiin Erdenechuluun, Mongolia was instrumental in the adoption of resolution 50/71 D on the Centre. We wish to express our profound thanks to the current Permanent Representative of Mongolia, His Excellency Mr. Jargalsaikhany Enkhsaikhan for once again introducing, on behalf of the sponsors, a draft resolution on the Centre. This shows his country's continued support for the Centre.

The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, also known as the Kathmandu Centre, has been providing a valuable forum for dialogue and consultation on disarmament issues. Each year, academicians and experts on disarmament matters from the region and beyond gather in Kathmandu and have frank exchanges of views and that touch on the entire

gamut of disarmament and international peace and security issues.

The representative of Mongolia has already touched upon the important features of the present draft resolution. I do not wish to be repetitive. The draft resolution has been made much shorter, clearer and more succinct in terms of its contents. Only the pertinent and relevant preambular and operative paragraphs have been retained.

My delegation would like to express its profound appreciation to those delegations that expressed strong support for the Centre's activities during the general debate of the First Committee. I wish to add that the Centre, working as it does in the interests of peace and disarmament, needs greater financial support to further carry out its useful activities. As the host country, it is gratifying for Nepal to see the growing support for the Centre. Therefore, my delegation would like to reiterate its appeal to Member States, particularly those from the Asia and Pacific region, as well as to international organizations and foundations, to increase their voluntary contributions to the Centre, so that it can further consolidate its activities. We also hope that the draft resolution will be adopted without a vote, as a similar text was last year.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Mr. Jessen-Petersen (Director, New York liaison office of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees): First, allow me to express the deep appreciation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for the opportunity to address this Committee on the problem of anti-personnel mines. UNHCR urges and supports resolute action towards the total elimination of this indiscriminate and deadly weapon.

As members of an organization responsible for the protection of and assistance to more than 26 million people who have sought safety from persecution, war or massive human rights abuses, UNHCR staff members around the world witness daily the untold suffering caused by landmines. Not only do landmines force people to leave their homes in search of safety, they also imperil their flight and later hinder their return. They prevent reintegration and reconstruction by making land unusable for settlement, cultivation or other economic activities. We have learned first-hand in the former Yugoslavia and in other conflict situations that the presence of landmines obstructs the delivery of life-saving emergency assistance. We have witnessed in Cambodia, Afghanistan and northern Iraq the nightmares revisited by returnees who have the misfortune to take a wrong step.

UNHCR has a responsibility to ensure that voluntary repatriation is conducted in safety and dignity, and that the security of refugees returning home and of humanitarian aid workers is not threatened by the existence of landmines. To reduce the devastating effect of mines on refugees and returnees, UNHCR has become involved in a number of mine-related activities. Our activities are focused on advocacy work in coordination with other organizations, risk-reduction programmes, including mine awareness and information programmes, and the pursuit of effective and coordinated international mechanisms for funding and carrying out landmine demarcation and clearance activities. We have also funded a comprehensive physical rehabilitation and vocational training programme for disabled mine victims as part of UNHCR's assistance to Afghan refugees in Pakistan. Although the task of locating and clearing mines does not fall to UNHCR itself, exceptionally UNHCR has funded mine-clearing activities in Cambodia, northern Somalia and Mozambique.

The High Commissioner for Refugees, Mrs. Sadako Ogata, has repeatedly spoken out against the inhumane and pernicious character of these weapons. At the International Meeting on Mine Clearance, held in Geneva in July 1995, she announced that UNHCR would not knowingly do business with any company which participates in the manufacture or sale of anti-personnel landmines or their components, either directly or indirectly through subsidiaries. A formal disclaimer by companies is now an obligatory part of all UNHCR procurement contracts.

UNHCR will continue to support actions, both global and regional, aimed at a total ban on the manufacture and use of anti-personnel mines. At the recent Ottawa International Strategy Conference, UNHCR, like many other participants, of course fully endorsed the comprehensive plan of action that the Conference adopted. We support the banning of anti-personnel mines within the framework of a legally binding international instrument. We also support the interim measures agreed to at the Conference, which were aimed at reducing the effects of anti-personnel mines, for example through demining and providing assistance to mine victims.

UNHCR welcomes draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.46 on this subject, which is before this Committee. On behalf of the many victims — past and future — among whom are those of concern to UNHCR, we urge that the draft resolution be both adopted and acted on.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.

United Nations A/C.1/51/PV.16

General Assembly
Fifty-first session

Official Records

First Committee
16th Meeting
Wednesday, 6 November 1996, 3 p.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Sychou . . . . . (Belarus)

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

Agenda items 60, 61 and 63 to 81 (*continued*)

Introduction and consideration of draft resolutions submitted on all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Egypt to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.43.

Mr. Abdel Aziz (Egypt): On behalf of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.43, namely Algeria, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, China, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea and Sri Lanka, I have the pleasure to introduce the draft resolution under agenda item 70 entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".

This draft resolution, while taking into account some technical updates, is broadly based on last year's resolution submitted by Sri Lanka under the same agenda item.

The objective of this draft resolution is evident. The sponsors believe that further efforts on this important disarmament issue have yet to be undertaken within the multilateral setting of the Conference on Disarmament, through its Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, to complement bilateral efforts in order to conclude a legally binding agreement that would avert the dangers to international peace and security of a possible resumption of an arms race in outer space.

Hence, particular importance is given in this draft resolution to the re-establishment within the Conference on Disarmament of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space. In this regard, it is indeed regrettable that the Conference on Disarmament failed in 1994 and 1995 to take the important step of reactivating the Ad Hoc Committee as requested by the General Assembly in two consecutive resolutions.

Nevertheless, we believe that the current positive international environment should bring us steps closer to the achievement of this important goal in a spirit of cooperation and understanding that could not have prevailed or even been sought in a bygone era.

Therefore, we should benefit from such a window of opportunity to achieve in outer space what was achievable or equally complex and controversial issues such as the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, the nuclear test ban and the bacteriological and chemical weapons conventions, together with others yet to come. In our view, the 1997 session of the Conference on Disarmament could be an appropriate time to tackle this issue in a comprehensive manner, building upon the work done by the Ad Hoc Committee since its establishment in 1985.

Some changes were made to the current text in order to galvanize the widest possible support. The most prominent of these is the elimination or consolidation of redundant paragraphs and the adoption of new language for operative paragraph 10 of last year's resolution, namely resolution 50/69, which has become operative paragraph 8 in the current draft, so as to urge all States taking interest in conducting activities in outer space to keep the

96-86736 (E)

This record contains the original texts of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

Conference on Disarmament informed of the progress of bilateral or multilateral negotiations relating to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, if any such negotiations take place outside the Conference on Disarmament.

The draft resolution consists of 17 preambular paragraphs and 9 operative paragraphs. In the preambular part, the General Assembly recognizes the common interest of all humankind in the exploration and peaceful use of outer space for the benefit and in the interest of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic and scientific development, and recalls its previous resolutions on the matter. It also recognizes that prevention of an arms race in outer space would avert a grave danger to international peace and security, reaffirms the relevant provisions of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, and reaffirms the provisions of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, in which it is stated that in order to prevent an arms race in outer space, further measures should be taken and appropriate international negotiations held in accordance with the spirit of the Treaty. It further emphasizes the paramount importance of strict compliance with existing arms limitations and disarmament agreements relevant to outer space, including bilateral agreements, and with the existing legal regime concerning the use of outer space, including wide participation in such a legal regime.

The preambular part also notes the work done by the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space since its establishment in 1985, including the examination and identification of various issues, existing agreements and proposals, as well as further initiatives relative to the prevention of an arms race in outer space; it therefore regrets the inability of the Conference on Disarmament to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee in 1996, and emphasizes the mutually complementary nature of bilateral and multilateral efforts in the field of preventing an arms race in outer space.

With regard to the operative part, the General Assembly reaffirms the importance and urgency of preventing an arms race in outer space and the readiness of all States to contribute to that common objective. It also reaffirms its recognition that the legal regime applicable to outer space does not by itself guarantee the prevention of an arms race in outer space, that there is a need to consolidate and reinforce the regime and enhance its effectiveness, and that it is important to comply strictly with existing agreements, both bilateral and multilateral. The General Assembly also emphasizes the necessity of further measures, with appropriate and effective provisions for verification, to prevent an arms race in outer space.

To that end, the Conference on Disarmament is requested in operative paragraph 6 to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space at the beginning of 1997, and to provide it with a negotiating mandate with a view to conducting negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements to prevent an arms race in all its aspects, taking into account the work undertaken by the Ad Hoc Committee since 1985.

The remaining operative part calls upon all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, to contribute actively to the objective of the peaceful use of outer space and the prevention of an arms race in outer space and to refrain from actions contrary to the objectives and to relevant existing treaties, and urges them to keep the Conference on Disarmament informed of the progress of any bilateral or multilateral negotiations relating to the prevention of such arms races so as to facilitate its work. Finally, the General Assembly decides to include the item entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" in the provisional agenda of its fifty-second session.

The co-sponsors hope that this draft resolution will be met with the support of the overwhelming majority of the delegations as a reaffirmation of our common interest in sustaining the peaceful uses of outer space.

The Chairman: I now call on the representative of Germany, who will introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/51/L.5 and A/C.1/51/L.47.

Mr. Hoffman (Germany): I would like to introduce two draft resolutions, and I do this wearing two different hats. First, I would like to introduce, as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission this year, draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.5. This was sponsored by the Bureau, that is Colombia, Finland, Germany, Jordan, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Ukraine and the United Republic of Tanzania. The draft resolution has been prepared in a similar manner to that of previous resolutions on the Disarmament Commission, with only certain appropriate technical changes in the text as the circumstances warrant. This draft is the result of informal consultations among members of the Disarmament Commission and it is recommended by its Bureau. In this regard, I should like to draw the Committee's attention to

several paragraphs of this draft resolution which refer to the guidelines for international arms transfers, the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and the question of the agenda items for the 1997 substantive session of the Commission.

As you will recall, the Disarmament Commission after a long time was able to adopt by consensus at its 1996 substantive session a set of guidelines for international transfers, as reflected in operative paragraph 2. In operative paragraph 3, the General Assembly would endorse the guidelines for implementation. With regard to operative paragraph 4, I am pleased to report that the Disarmament Commission has indeed made significant progress in the discussions on its agenda item on the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in spite of the divergent views expressed. It is clear that further efforts are still required. However, to reflect this positive circumstance, it was proposed in an informal meeting this morning and endorsed by the Bureau to change operative paragraph 4 in such a way that it reads:

> "... significant progress in the discussions on its agenda item regarding the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament."

Operative paragraph 9 concerns the substantive items for the 1997 session of the Disarmament Commission in accordance with the adopted three-item phased approach. You can see in the text before you that we have only dots there. At an informal meeting this morning, the Commission agreed on two items for its 1997 substantive session and the Bureau has agreed to include these in the draft resolution. These are: first, the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned; second, the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. These items will therefore be listed under operative paragraph 9 (a) and (b) of the draft resolution. There has so far been no agreement on the third item. Accordingly, footnote 5 will be changed to read:

> "The new item on conventional weapons will be decided by the Disarmament Commission at its 1996 organizational session."

Let me make this absolutely clear. We will agree to have an item on conventional disarmament, and this will be decided at the organizational session in December at which we will decide on the whole setting of items to be discussed next year.

These changes to the draft resolution will be included in document A/C.1/51/L.5/Rev.1, which should be available tomorrow. With these brief remarks, I hope that this draft resolution will be adopted without a vote, as has been the case in previous years.

Now I change hats, and as head of the German delegation I would like to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/51/L.47, "Objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures".

This draft resolution has been sponsored by Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Chile, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Since the draft resolution has been developed in a joint effort by the delegations of Romania and Germany, I would like very much very to thank the delegation of Romania for its close cooperation.

During the thematic debate my delegation noted with satisfaction the broad support that was continually given to the concept of confidence-building measures, at the global as well as regional levels, as a means to preserve international peace and security. My delegation also strongly supports this assessment, and let me reiterate that in our view transparency and objective information on military matters are of particular value.

The draft resolution before us takes up the issue of the United Nations reporting system on military expenditures, which was adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 35/142 B on 12 December 1980 and is designed to promote transparency at a global level. This instrument complements the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. While the Register focuses on international arms transfers within specific weapon categories, the standardized reporting system on military expenditures gives a more general overview of national defence policies through the disclosure of national spending on military personnel, forces' operations and maintenance, procurement and research and development.

Thus, the standardized reporting system on military expenditures is certainly not the only instrument but is still an important and valuable tool which — and this is expressed in the seventh preambular paragraph of the draft resolution — can contribute significantly to decreasing

levels of suspicion and to increasing confidence-building among States.

The valuable potential of this reporting system has been acknowledged by all Member States several times through the repeated adoption without a vote in 1992, 1993 and 1994 of previous resolutions under the same title, which are recalled in the first and second preambular paragraphs.

In the third and sixth preambular paragraphs, the draft resolution notes and welcomes the decision of many Member States to participate in the standardized reporting system. Regrettably, however, participation in the annual reporting continues to be disappointing, and thus the insufficient number of replies gives rise to concern. It is for this reason that the draft resolution not only calls upon Member States in operative paragraph 2 to report annually to the Secretary-General their military expenditures for the latest fiscal year for which data are available, but also in operative paragraph 4 requests the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States and make recommendations on necessary changes to the content and structure of the standardized reporting system in order to strengthen and broaden participation.

This approach depends, however, to a large extent on the cooperation of Member States. That is why in operative paragraph 5 the draft resolution calls upon all Member States to provide the Secretary-General with their views on ways and means to strengthen and broaden participation, including necessary changes to its content and structure.

It must be our common goal to prevent this valuable instrument of confidence-building, which has always been unanimously agreed on by the community of Member States, from being undermined through neglect and, thereby, also to protect the credibility of the United Nations General Assembly resolutions. Operative paragraphs 4, 5 and 6 of the draft resolution therefore stress the need for action by suggesting a return to annual consideration of this matter after a year's pause and to take up this issue at the fifty-second session of the General Assembly.

This resolution has no financial implications, since operative paragraph 4, based on consultations with the Secretariat, requests the Secretary-General to submit a report within existing resources.

Let me finally express our sincere hope that the community of Member States will again be able to adopt this resolution by consensus as it did in previous years.

Mr. Neagu (Romania): Since this is the first time I have spoken under your chairmanship, Sir, allow me to congratulate you most warmly on your election as Chairman of the First Committee at the fifty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly. I am confident that under your able guidance our deliberations will be entirely successful.

I asked for the floor in order to refer to draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.47 on "Objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures" that has just been so ably introduced by the representative of Germany, Ambassador Hoffman.

Increased transparency in the military field leads to increased confidence and thus to the creation of the necessary environment for the reduction of military activities, armaments, troops and budgets, as a sine qua non requirement for strengthening peace and increasing stability. Openness, transparency and confidence-building measures have clearly gained global significance.

Strengthening confidence-building activities along the lines provided for in this draft resolution helps to prevent misunderstanding and miscalculations that might lead to military confrontation. If information on military capabilities and openness in military affairs are available, that will provide the opportunity to reduce the risk of military confrontation, thereby achieving a realistic reduction in military budgets.

The United Nations standardized reporting of military expenditures, which has been in place for more than a decade, has proved to be instrumental in this regard. This was particularly the case for Europe, where these standards were taken by member States of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe as a basis for the elaboration of a concrete Europe-wide system of national reporting of military expenditure. As is well known, conventional forces in Europe have been reduced greatly.

The demise of the cold war and ideological confrontation creates conditions for sustained general participation in reporting to the United Nations. Regrettably, however, as underlined in the report of European Union member and associated States, including Romania, overall participation in such reporting on the part of Member States of the United Nations barely exceeded 20 in 1995 and is thus very low. This is why we consider well-placed the call contained in operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution for all Member States to report annually, by April, to the Secretary-General their military

expenditures for the latest fiscal year for which data are available, using the reporting instrument as recommended in resolution 35/142 B.

In the meantime, we consider that this reporting system could be improved to ensure more active and broader participation. The request addressed to the Secretary-General in draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.47 to seek the views of Member States and to make recommendations on necessary changes to the content and the structure of the standardized reporting system of military expenditures in order to strengthen and broaden participation is of particular importance to this end.

Finally, I would like to thank the German delegation for its excellent cooperation in this matter, and to thank all the sponsors of this draft resolution for their support. I join Ambassador Hoffman in calling for the adoption of this draft resolution by consensus, as has been the case with similar texts in previous years.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Mali, to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.35.

Mr. Ouane (Mali) (*interpretation from French*): It is once again an honour and a pleasure for my delegation to introduce for the third consecutive year a draft resolution on assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and collecting them, draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.35. I do so on behalf of the following other sponsors: Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Gabon, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Niger and Togo.

The initiative in the draft resolution reflects the commitment of the sponsors to the major goal of the Organization: general and complete disarmament. This initiative enables us to draw the attention of the international community to the disastrous consequences of small arms, particularly in developing countries, where they are generally responsible for fueling conflicts. This has contributed to introducing into our Organization the now well-known concept of micro-disarmament.

The purpose of the draft resolution is to obtain from the international community assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and collecting them. In this context, the General Assembly would consider that the circulation of massive quantities of small arms throughout the world impedes development and is the source of increased insecurity.

It would also consider, in the preambular part of the draft resolution, that the illicit international transfer of small arms and their accumulation in many countries constitute a threat to the populations and to national and regional security and are a factor contributing to the destabilization of States.

The preambular part goes on to indicate that the Assembly is gravely concerned at the extent of the insecurity and banditry linked to the illicit circulation of small arms in Mali and the other affected States of the Saharo-Sahelian subregion. The Assembly would take note of the first conclusions of the United Nations advisory missions sent to the affected countries in the subregion by the Secretary-General to study the best way of curbing the illicit circulation of small arms and ensuring their collection. Finally, the General Assembly would recall the actions taken and those recommended at the meetings of the States of the subregion held at Banjul, Algiers and Bamako to establish close regional cooperation with a view to strengthening security.

In the light of those considerations, the General Assembly, in the operative part of the draft resolution, would welcome the initiative taken by Mali concerning the question of the illicit circulation of small arms and their collection, and would welcome the action taken by the Secretary-General in implementation of this initiative in the context of resolution 40/151 H of 16 December 1985.

The Assembly would thank the Governments concerned in the subregion for the substantial support that they have given to the United Nations advisory missions and welcome the declared readiness of other States to receive the United Nations Advisory Mission.

By paragraph 4, the Assembly would encourage the Secretary-General to continue his efforts in the context of the implementation of resolution 49/75 G and of the recommendations of the United Nations advisory missions, to curb the illicit circulation of small arms and to collect such arms in the affected States that so request, with the support of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa and in close cooperation with the Organization of African Unity.

The General Assembly would note by paragraph 5 that, as part of its efforts to halt the flow of small arms into Mali and the Saharo-Sahelian subregion, the Malian Government oversaw the destruction, at the "Flame of Peace" ceremony held at Timbuktu on 27 March 1996, of

thousands of small arms handed over by ex-combatants of the armed movements of northern Mali.

Finally, the draft resolution encourages the setting up in the countries of the Saharo-Sahelian subregion of national commissions against the proliferation of small arms and requests the Secretary-General to continue to examine the issue and to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session.

We thank the sponsors of the draft resolution for their support. I am very pleased on their behalf to call upon all States to adopt it by consensus, as in previous years.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.42.

Mr. Calovski (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): On behalf of my delegation and of the delegations of Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Denmark, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Norway, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom and Zaire, I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution entitled "The maintenance of international security — prevention of the violent disintegration of States", which is contained in document A/C.1/51/L.42.

By this draft resolution the General Assembly will decide to take up the item "The maintenance of international security — prevention of the violent disintegration of States" at its fifty-third session, as an important part of its efforts to strengthen international security and to promote international cooperation. This is, as we all know, a very serious subject, particularly in my country's region. Good preparation is necessary for useful and productive deliberations on this subject. It is for this reason that the draft resolution requests all States and relevant international organizations to communicate to the Secretary-General their views on the subject.

The starting point of draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.42 is respect for the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, strict compliance with the principle of the inviolability of international borders among States, and good-neighbourliness and friendly relations among States.

The draft resolution takes into account the emergence of new opportunities for building a peaceful world, and considers that the violent disintegration of States may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security.

Furthermore, draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.42 stresses the importance of the activities of international organizations with the aim of preventing the violent disintegration of States, of maintaining international peace and security and of promoting international cooperation for development. It calls upon all States, relevant international organizations and competent organs of the United Nations to continue to undertake measures in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations as appropriate to help prevent the violent disintegration of States. In short, draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.42 advocates undertaking preventive measures in the maintenance of international security. It goes without saying that undertaking such preventive measures will have direct and positive effects on the disarmament process.

We have endeavoured to produce a text that will meet the Committee's approval without a vote.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all representatives for their suggestions, cooperation and support, and particularly for understanding the need for our initiative. Finally, I would like to note, that we requested the Secretariat to issue a revised text listing the names of the sponsors and deleting the word "governmental" from paragraph 4. It was explained to us that owing to financial reasons this was not possible.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of the Netherlands to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.18.

Mr. Ramaker (Netherlands): As this is the first time that I am officially addressing the Committee, let me first of all congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the Committee. We are very pleased to see you in the Chair, and we assure you of our continued support.

During the informal thematic debate last week, my delegation made a statement on confidence-building measures, including transparency in armaments. On that occasion, I stressed the importance of increasing confidence between States in the absence of real and concrete conventional arms control and disarmament. Increased confidence, in our view, promotes stability and thus enhances international peace and security.

The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms is a practical confidence-building measure aimed at achieving

enhanced peace and security worldwide as well as regionally. Today, I introduce draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.18 on transparency in armaments and, as members know, a considerable place is reserved in that draft resolution for the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. I introduce this draft resolution on behalf of 91 sponsors, but in order to save time I will not read them out.

Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.18 seeks to confirm the importance of enhancing transparency in armaments and confidence-building in general. It addresses the importance of the Register as a confidence-building measure. The Register aims to be a rather simple and straightforward measure to help avoid misperceptions about other States' conventional strength and to provide early warning against destabilizing accumulations of conventional weapons. That transparency is created by data provided by Member States to the Secretary-General on their imports and exports of those seven categories of conventional arms which can be particularly destabilizing if accumulated in quantities beyond legitimate self-defence needs. Of course, the absence of imports and exports is also important knowledge contributing to more confidence. Therefore, States not having transferred arms in a particular year are also requested to report this in a "nil return" to the Secretary-General. All entries are stored in the Register, which is published each year in order to provide States with transparency in international arms transfers. In this way, the Register can have a modest but direct impact on security relations between States globally, but also in the regions where it matters most.

Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.18 renews the call upon Member States to provide the Secretary-General with these data. It welcomes the report of the Secretary-General in document A/51/300 and the addenda that have thus far appeared with the Register data on arms transfers in 1995. Again more than 90 States have provided data, covering the vast majority of the arms transfers in the world. This is solid participation, but of course it is never enough. It is therefore appropriate that it was decided as long as two years ago that a group of governmental experts should once more study the issue and prepare a report on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development. Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.18 recalls this decision of the General Assembly. The expert group will meet next year and will assist the Secretary-General in drawing up his report with findings on the scope of and participation in the Register. That report will be presented to the General Assembly with a view to a decision at its next session on how to maintain and possibly enhance the Register.

As I have said on previous occasions when we discussed this issue, the support for the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms is solid. This solid support was also confirmed by the willingness of many delegations once more to sponsor a draft resolution on this subject. I would like to thank all the 91 other sponsors for expressing their support for the important confidence-building measure that the Register is. It shows that the idea of transparency in armaments is firmly rooted in all regions of the world where nations are convinced of the usefulness of maintaining openness in relation to transfers of conventional arms.

Let me take this opportunity to address another issue. This morning the delegation of Sweden introduced draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.40 on the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Injurious Effects (CCW), and the Netherlands wishes, as a sponsor, to express its full support for that draft resolution. Traditionally, the Netherlands and Sweden work very closely together on draft resolutions on this item with a view to encouraging States to adhere to the Convention. We are pleased with the outcome of the Review Conference of the States Parties to the CCW, held in Geneva last May. This was an important achievement strengthening the humanitarian law of warfare, in particular by further restricting the use and transfer of landmines and prohibiting a whole category of new weapons, namely laser weapons. We call upon States which have not done so to accede to the Convention and to express their consent to be bound by the amended Protocol II and the by the new Protocol IV of the Convention.

The Chairman: I now call on the Representative of Afghanistan, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.16.

Mr. Osman (Afghanistan): I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Measures to curb the illicit transfer and use of conventional arms", contained in A/C.1/51/L.16

The draft resolution recognizes that massive quantities of conventional weapons and especially their illicit transfer, are most disturbing and dangerous phenomena and are often associated with destabilizing activities and violations of human rights. The availability of weapons encourages certain groups to bypass peaceful means in resolving disputes and turn to violence. In certain situations, mercenaries, terrorists and child soldiers are supplied with

weapons acquired through illicit transfers of conventional arms.

Mr. García (Colombia), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

Paragraph 1 of this draft resolution welcomes the adoption by the Disarmament Commission of the report on international arms transfers, with particular reference to General Assembly resolution 46/36 H, as well as a text entitled "Guidelines for international arms transfers in the context of General Assembly resolution 46/36 H of 6 December 1991". I commend Colombia for introducing that resolution five years ago. The draft resolution also invites Member States to enact adequate national legislation and/or regulations and adopt administrative procedures in order to exercise effective control over armaments and the export and import of arms, *inter alia*, to prevent trafficking in illicit arms and to bring offenders to justice.

I would like to draw attention to two changes in paragraph 2 (a); these are not substantive changes. Please insert the words "in order" after the word "procedure", and replace the words "to prevent" with the words "with the aim of preventing".

In order to promote peace and develop cooperation among all States, it is our common cause and responsibility to strive to fulfill the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations which call for the maintenance of peace and security. I extend my appreciation to the delegations which sponsored this draft resolution, and urge the Committee to adopt this draft resolution by consensus, as it did with a similar text last year.

Mr. Ok (Cambodia) (*interpretation from French*): As this is the first time I have addressed the First Committee, I would like to convey to Ambassador Sychou my delegation's congratulations and best wishes on his election to the Chairmanship of our Committee. We also wish to congratulate the other members of the Bureau.

As a country strewn with landmines, the Kingdom of Cambodia strongly supports draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.46, which was introduced to the First Committee by the United States delegation on Monday, 4 November 1996. My delegation would like to thank the United States for its tireless work to increase the number of sponsors of the draft resolution on an international agreement prohibiting anti-personnel landmines. The ever-increasing number of sponsors clearly shows the concern of all States at the danger posed by these weapons. This is a clear demonstration of the international community's will and ability to deal successfully with the threat of anti-personnel landmines.

Since the number of mines laid indiscriminately throughout the world every year is rising, not falling, my delegation believes that it is not enough merely to intend to eliminate these weapons. For our children to be able to walk freely and peacefully in the world, all States must take action. We hope that the States that have said that they need these weapons to protect their troops will find other ways to do this in the future.

Until there is an international agreement to eliminate these weapons entirely, my delegation calls upon all States for humanitarian reasons to refrain unilaterally or collectively from using, producing, stockpiling or transferring these mines.

On 8 October 1996, in his statement in the general debate at the fifty-first session of the General Assembly, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cambodia made the following comments about the problem of mines:

(*spoke in English*)

> "While we are addressing the issue of the CTBT and the ban on weapons of mass destruction, we should not overlook the issue of landmines in various parts of the world. Cambodia is the hardest hit nation in the world. The Royal Government and the people of Cambodia pay great tribute to all the generous donor countries that have assisted us in our efforts to rid the country of the scourge of landmines. But how many millions of these cold, cruel and silent enemies still await our unsuspecting and innocent civilian population in remote areas of the country near the western border? Banning them is an easy job. We need international support to fully eradicate them.
>
> "In his message to the Review Conference of the States Parties to the 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons last April, His Majesty Preah Bat Samdech Preah Norodom Sihanouk Varman, King of Cambodia, appealed to all countries and peoples, international organizations, States and Governments to take, in a universal consensus, concrete measures towards definitively outlawing, as soon as possible, the production, export, utilization and sale of mines." (*Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Plenary Meetings, 26th meeting, p. 15*)

(*spoke in French*)

The Kingdom of Cambodia expresses its belief that this draft resolution marks an important step in the right direction towards solving the worldwide crisis of landmines. My delegation does not exclude other complementary measures such as regional or international conferences. We deeply appreciate Canada's efforts and the success of the Ottawa International Strategy Conference "Towards a Global Ban on Anti-Personnel Landmines", which met at Ottawa last month. We also appreciate the willingness of countries such as Belgium and Switzerland to hold follow-up conferences.

It is time for all States to mobilize to make the complete elimination of these weapons a reality. In this spirit my delegation calls on all States to vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.46.

The Acting Chairman (*interpretation from Spanish*): We have heard the last speaker on today's list.

As delegates will recall, at an earlier meeting of the Committee, the Chairman stated that an informal paper containing a list of all draft resolutions submitted under disarmament and international security agenda items arranged in appropriate clusters would be circulated in the Committee.

Following consultations with the Bureau of the Committee, the Chair is now in a position to present to representatives a suggested programme of action listing draft resolutions organized in 10 clusters, in accordance with the thematic approach adopted. The document is being distributed to members of the Committee. With the consent of the Committee, it is the intention of the Chair to proceed with the action on draft resolutions, to the extent possible, in the sequential order of the clusters. In following this procedure, the Chair will maintain the necessary degree of flexibility. To facilitate representatives' work, it is the intention of the Chair to give advance notice of the days on which action on a particular cluster will be taken up.

Delegations should bear in mind that before action is taken on each cluster, they will have an opportunity, if they wish, to make general statements, as opposed to explanations of position or vote, on the draft resolutions of each cluster.

Delegations will be able to speak in explanation of position or vote on any or all of the draft resolutions contained in a particular cluster before action is taken on the draft resolutions. After the Committee has taken decisions on all the draft resolutions contained in a given cluster, delegations will once again have an opportunity to speak in explanation of position or vote, if they wish to do so.

In order to enable the Chair to conduct the proceedings of the Committee efficiently, the Chair appeals to all delegates to make, if possible, one consolidated statement on the draft resolutions contained in a given cluster, in explanation of position or vote either before or after action is taken by the Committee.

I take it that all representatives have before them copies of the programme of work proposed by the Chairman, and I invite them to comment on it.

Mr. Abdel Aziz (Egypt): It is our understanding that this approach is going to be implemented in a flexible way, as it was last year, so that draft resolutions that are ready in clusters will be voted on and those that are still being dealt with in informal consultations will be taken up at a later stage. We would like to stress the importance of maintaining consultations with the leading sponsor of each draft resolution with regard to the timing of the vote on each draft resolution. With that understanding, I fully agree with the Chair's proposal.

The Acting Chairman (*interpretation from Spanish*): The practice to be followed this year is similar to that of previous years, with the necessary degree of flexibility, as the representative of Egypt has pointed out.

Mr. Sarna (India): I would just like to request a clarification. As I understand it, before action is taken on each cluster, delegations will have the opportunity to make a general statement on the cluster. Do I also understand that the explanations of vote also have to be made in a consolidated fashion for each cluster? Or would it be possible to make an explanation of vote before or after action on each draft resolution?

The Acting Chairman (*interpretation from Spanish*): The idea is that, as far as possible, explanations of vote on the draft resolutions contained in a given cluster should be made, in one consolidated statement. That is the proposal of the Chair.

Mr. Elahi (Pakistan): Our understanding was that you, Sir, had suggested that it would be preferable for delegations to make a single statement, but that if a delegation felt that an individual item required a separate

explanation of vote, it would be able to give one. Could the Chair confirm that understanding?

The Acting Chairman (*interpretation from Spanish*): We merely wish to facilitate, in an orderly way, the offering of explanations of vote and position. It is obvious that, whenever a delegation wishes to explain its vote or position on a separate basis, it is entitled to do so. The Chair will be flexible whenever such a situation arises.

Mr. Mesdoua (Algeria) *(interpretation from French)*: Like previous speakers, I should like to have some further clarification. My understanding was that it was the Chair's idea to have a single explanation of vote covering a whole group of issues.

My delegation has some difficulty in agreeing with that suggestion. May I therefore ask the Chairman to be flexible and try rather to persuade delegations not to depart from our usual practice while at the same time avoiding lengthy explanations of vote.

The Acting Chairman *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Obviously, and as representatives have suggested, the Chair will be as flexible as possible. Insofar as possible, whenever an explanation of vote is given, we would prefer that various draft resolutions in the same cluster be included; but if a delegation wishes to make a separate statement, it can also do so.

This is merely a suggestion in order to help the Committee better to organize its work. It is not intended to prevent any delegation from expressing its views or explaining its vote on a specific draft resolution.

In light of these clarifications, may I take it that the Committee accepts the Chair's proposal; as contained in the document distributed?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.

United Nations A/C.1/51/PV.17

General Assembly

Fifty-first session

Official Records

First Committee

17th Meeting

Thursday, 7 November 1996, 3 p.m.

New York

Chairman: Mr. Sychou ..... (Belarus)

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Agenda items 60, 61 and 63-81 (*continued*)

Introduction and consideration of draft resolutions submitted on all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Brazil to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.4.

Mr. Amorim (Brazil): I have the honour of introducing to the First Committee draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.4, on "The nuclear-weapon-free Southern Hemisphere and adjacent areas", on behalf of the following 65 sponsors: Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bahamas, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Mexico, the Federated States of Micronesia, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Samoa, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Suriname, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Zaire and Zimbabwe. A revised version, A/C.1/51/L.4/Rev.1, with the names of all the sponsors, will be circulated shortly.

In the nuclear disarmament area, one of the most significant developments of the last decades is that, in several parts of the world, the nuclear option has already been ruled out. Nuclear-weapon-free zones have been formally established in Latin America and the Caribbean, with the Treaty of Tlatelolco, and subsequently in the South Pacific, with the Treaty of Rarotonga; in South-East Asia, with the Treaty of Bangkok; and in Africa, with the Treaty of Pelindaba.

The areas of application of these treaties, with the addition of the Antarctic Treaty, combine to free from nuclear weapons all the peoples of the southern hemisphere, as well as of the adjacent areas north of the equator where the treaties apply. Those States, in close consultation with their neighbours, have renounced the acquisition of nuclear weapons and accepted stringent verification commitments to that effect — commitments which go above and beyond those accepted by non-nuclear States that are not members of nuclear-weapon-free-zone treaties. Those States have also committed themselves, *inter alia*, not to accept the stationing of nuclear weapons in their territories, reflecting the wish of their societies to safeguard themselves against the horrors of nuclear warfare. They have received, or will receive, security guarantees from the nuclear-weapon States, to the effect that those instruments of annihilation will never be used against them. Last but not least, all the members of nuclear-weapon-free zones are strongly supportive of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. It is important to note in this context that the President of the United States, in his statement before the General Assembly in September, said that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)

> "points us towards a century in which the roles and risks of nuclear weapons can be further reduced and

96-86742 (E)

This record contains the original texts of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

ultimately eliminated". *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Plenary Meetings, 6th meeting, p. 1)*

We should all agree with that statement. In the twenty-first century, the whole world — southern and northern hemisphere alike — must be a nuclear-weapon-free zone. The security benefits of the absence of nuclear weapons will then be enjoyed by all States and peoples.

Meanwhile, our initiative aims at achieving recognition by the General Assembly of the progressive emergence of a nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas. Such recognition should be considered as a confirmation of the commitments of the international community towards non-proliferation and disarmament.

This draft resolution, of course, does not create new legal obligations. It does not contradict any norm of international law applicable to ocean space, such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. However, this draft resolution aims at recalling the need to respect existing commitments under nuclear-weapon-free-zone treaties and their protocols; it asks all relevant States that have not yet done so to move towards ratification of such treaties and protocols, and calls upon all States to consider further proposals for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. The draft resolution will uphold the legal rule against acquiring, using or threatening to use nuclear weapons against anyone, and in particular against members of nuclear-weapon-free zones. In addition, the promotion of the idea that most of the globe is nuclear-weapon-free will undoubtedly have a demonstration effect and add impetus to the process of nuclear disarmament and to the strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

We expect all States that support nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament to sponsor and, next week, to vote in favour of this draft resolution.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Nigeria to introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/51/L.32 and A/C.1/51/L.24.

Ms. Laose-Ajayi (Nigeria): I wish to introduce the draft resolution, contained in document A/C.1/51/L.32, on the United Nations disarmament fellowship, training and advisory services, on behalf of the following sponsors: Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Germany, Greece, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Kenya, Liberia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam and Nigeria.

According to the report of the Secretary-General on this subject, the objectives of the fellowship training programme are varied, and they include providing young diplomats with a general background in disarmament and security-related issues; enabling them to gain confidence in discussing disarmament issues based on their knowledge and understanding; allowing them to improve their negotiating skills; and familiarizing them with the procedures and practices of disarmament negotiating and deliberating bodies. Over 300 diplomats, mostly from developing countries, have benefited from this programme. In fact, the programme, beyond introducing fellows to disarmament, actually serves to introduce many young government officials from the developing world to the whole United Nations system, with the result that some of the trained fellows today find themselves in other international forums both within and outside the United Nations, representing their countries in various areas of international relations. Today, the records also show that many developed countries find the training programme appropriate for their young diplomats. This goes a long way towards proving the relevance of the programme to the entire membership and agenda of the United Nations.

In light of that, we appeal to Member States to continue to accord the programme all the support and assistance that it needs in order to keep the number of fellows trained annually to that recommended in the Concluding Document of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly and to ensure that the course content and duration are worthy of the programme's name and the high standard that has been its benchmark since its inception in 1979.

Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.32 is essentially similar to those of past years. In the preambular paragraphs, it notes with satisfaction that the programme has trained a number of public officials selected from geographical regions represented in the United Nations system and that many officials of developing countries have acquired expertise through the training programme.

In its operative paragraphs, it reaffirms the relevant decision on the programme, as contained in annex IV to the Concluding Document of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly, and expresses appreciation to the Governments of Member States that invited the 1996 fellows to study selected activities in the field of

disarmament, thereby contributing to the fulfilment of the overall objectives of the programme.

The decision to biennialize reporting on the programme and consideration of the draft resolution necessitated a slight change in paragraph 4. The change merely spelt out clearly that the programme will continue to be implemented annually.

My delegation takes this opportunity to express its gratitude to the Governments of Japan and Germany for their invitation to the fellows in 1996, and also to the Secretary-General and the Centre for Disarmament Affairs for their continued support.

The support of all Member States is required in order to enable the training programme to continue to achieve its important objective. It is the hope of the sponsors that the draft resolution will be adopted without a vote, as in previous years.

I also have the honour to introduce another draft resolution, contained in document A/C.1/51/L.24, on prohibition of the dumping of radioactive wastes, on behalf of the Group of African States, France, Mongolia and the Russian Federation.

When this resolution was first submitted at the forty-third session of the General Assembly in 1988, many doubted its relevance to our work in this forum. However, they have patiently allowed it to pass year in year out. Concerns resulting from the 1986 accident at Chernobyl led to international cooperation in addressing nuclear safety, including the safe management of nuclear wastes. The recent Moscow summit on nuclear safety and security also helped to reinforce the importance of such cooperation.

We are glad that there is now a commitment to an international nuclear safety culture. We welcome the entry into force of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Convention on Nuclear Safety, which can only complement and reinforce existing instruments on the handling of radioactive wastes, such as the Bamako Convention for the African region, the London Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and other Matter, the Waigani Convention for the South Pacific region, and the IAEA Code of Practice on the International Transboundary Movement of Radioactive Waste. We look forward to the promised three new legally-binding instruments which will, *inter alia*, contain basic rules concerning the safe management, including disposal, of radioactive wastes and even oblige States to submit periodic reports.

While we consider all this to represent a noteworthy development in matters dealt with in the draft resolution, we continue to call for progress at the Conference on Disarmament on the agenda item entitled "New Types of Weapons of Mass Destruction and New Systems of Such Weapons: Radiological Weapons". That will lay to rest the fears of the developing countries that they are being subjected to a subtle form of radiological warfare through exposure to radioactive wastes or dumping of radioactive wastes or materials on their territories.

In the preambular part of the draft resolution this year, note is taken of the commitment by the participants at the Moscow summit on nuclear safety and security to ban the dumping at sea of radioactive wastes. In its operative part, it welcomes their call on all States generating nuclear wastes with nuclear installations to participate actively in the preparation of the relevant convention on which the IAEA is currently working.

Apart from these two new additions, the draft resolution is the same as in past years. The sponsors of the draft resolution would once again appreciate its adoption without a vote, as in the past few years.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Egypt to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.28.

Mr. Elaraby (Egypt): The Middle East region is the cradle of civilization, rich in cultural heritage and spiritual enlightenment and the birthplace of three divine religions. It is normal for such a region to expound peace as a cornerstone of its contribution to human civilization. Yet the Middle East has been the theatre of strife and armed conflicts for over forty years.

It would therefore seem timely for us today seriously to embark on laying the solid foundations on which to proceed towards establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The consensus that has emerged in the General Assembly in respect of this proposal and the steadfast support it has received in bilateral declarations as well as in various multilateral forums are no doubt cogent testimony to the viability and to the relevance of this concept.

The establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East would greatly contribute to arresting the proliferation of nuclear weapons and strengthening the

security of all States in the region and, consequently, would be deemed to be an important confidence-building measure indicative of the common desire of all States of the region to live in peace.

At the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly, the study on effective and verifiable measures which would facilitate the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East was presented for the consideration of this Committee. The study was generally well received as a useful and balanced approach to attain an important objective. In quoting the study, I would only refer to its conclusion, in which it is stated that:

> "There ... is no doubt that the goal can be reached; it is not an idle dream". *(A/45/435, para. 175)*

The study goes on to state that:

> "The effort required will be great, but so will the benefits of success". *(Ibid., para. 176)*

Though we fully realize that peace, security and stability in the region of the Middle East will be achieved only when a comprehensive, just and lasting peace is attained, it is essential to create the necessary climate and conditions to facilitate the achievement of this end result. In our view, the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone would contribute substantially to such a result. It is important to emphasize that the zone should not be viewed as nor reduced to a mere subsidiary factor. On the contrary, the objectives that it serves are fundamental in their own right by virtue of eliminating the threat of a nuclear arms race in the Middle East region.

In introducing draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.28 under agenda item 67, entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East", I find it important to state that my delegation conducted wide consultations and exerted every possible effort to recognize two factors: the consensual dimension of the draft resolution, on the one hand, and the inevitability of reflecting relevant regional and extraregional realities, on the other.

In this vein, the twelfth preambular paragraph bears on the current state of affairs in the Middle East peace process by noting that the peace negotiations should be of a comprehensive nature and represent an appropriate framework for the peaceful settlement of contentious issues in the region. Furthermore, the thirteenth preambular paragraph develops a global level by taking note of the decisions adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and its resolution on the Middle East.

It is our considered opinion that the time is now ripe to proceed towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. For this reason, paragraph 10 of the draft resolution endeavours once again to utilize the good offices of the Secretary-General to inject the required impetus into the process.

I would also like to invite the Committee's attention to the eleventh preambular paragraph and paragraph 9, in which reference is made to the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. This is a broader initiative that not only highlights the nuclear factor, but adds to it the chemical- and biological-weapons dimensions.

Since the announcement of this initiative by President Mubarak on 9 April 1990, it has been attracting an ever-widening degree of support. The Security Council adopted resolution 687 (1991) of 8 April 1991, which reiterates the need to work towards the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction.

It is our sincere hope that the States of the Middle East will work towards the implementation of both proposals simultaneously in order to eliminate the shadows of suspicion and mistrust.

Before concluding, in submitting draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.28, I would like to reiterate that we have conducted extensive informal consultations on its formulation with all the delegations belonging to our region and with other interested parties in order to accommodate different concerns. In this spirit, conscious of the need to preserve the consensus that this resolution has enjoyed over the years and as a demonstration of flexibility and of general understanding on the part of my delegation, I would like to announce the following amendments.

First, the fourth preambular paragraph should be deleted, despite the fact that it represents a direct quotation of consensus language derived from the decision adopted by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference.

Secondly, the phrase of paragraph 3:

> "and the statement made by the President and accepted by the General Conference on 20 September

1996 regarding the implementation of Agency safeguards in the Middle East",

should be deleted. We do so owing to the fact that the statement made by the President of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) General Conference on 20 September 1996 regarding the implementation of Agency safeguards in the Middle East is already reflected in the resolution adopted by the General Assembly last week under agenda item 14, entitled "Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency".

Thirdly — and I wish to underline this point — we are still conducting consultations on the seventh preambular paragraph on nuclear safety. The result of these consultations with respect to the seventh preambular paragraph will be submitted by my delegation to the Committee in document A/C.1/51/L.28/Rev.1 in due course.

I therefore commend this draft resolution to the First Committee and sincerely hope that it will receive the same support as in previous sessions and be adopted without a vote.

Mr. Pell (United States of America): On behalf of the Russian Federation and of the United States, I am pleased to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.45 entitled "Bilateral nuclear arms negotiations and nuclear disarmament".

Our purpose in presenting this draft resolution is to place on record the recent and positive developments in reducing our strategic nuclear weapons arsenals. Among other signs of progress since last year's resolution, draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.45 notes that the United States has ratified the START II agreement and expresses the hope that Russia will do so soon. It also welcomes the removal of all nuclear weapons from Kazakstan and Ukraine, as well as the accession of Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakstan to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as non-nuclear States.

Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.45 also indicates that much work remains to be done in this field and strongly encourages Russia and the United States to continue to give the highest priority to reducing further their nuclear weapons. It also encourages all nuclear-weapon States to consider appropriate measures relating to nuclear disarmament. In this regard, the draft resolution provides further impetus to the nuclear-weapon States to continue meeting their obligations under article VI of the NPT. And, perhaps most importantly, the draft resolution once again reaffirms that further progress is necessary to contribute to the ultimate goal of eliminating nuclear weapons.

I have to emphasize how much has already been done in the field of nuclear disarmament — much more than any of us could have expected even a few years ago. Russia and the United States have been and continue to be proud of this record of progress, which has not been easy to achieve. Let us take a brief look at the highlights.

First, an entire class of nuclear weapons has been abolished through the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty; secondly, START I has entered into force and reductions are proceeding more than two years ahead of schedule; thirdly, when START II is implemented, it will lower Russian and United States strategic nuclear arms to about one-third of pre-START levels; and fourthly, after START II is ratified, our Presidents have committed themselves to discussions on further reductions.

Time does not permit a reading of the far more extensive record of nuclear disarmament efforts to date. The facts are well known, however, and I would invite all United Nations Members to reflect upon them. Equally important, I would ask that all United Nations Members appreciate the fact that these efforts are accelerating. Even now, both countries are dismantling nuclear weapons as fast as is technically possible. Ways are being sought to speed up this process, within the bounds of concern for safety and environmental protection.

Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.45 points to a practical way to achieve nuclear disarmament under current circumstances: a step-by-step approach which includes all involved parties. Such an approach has produced measurable progress in the past. It is multilateral when it has to be, as with the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and, hopefully, with the upcoming negotiations for a cut-off of fissile-material production. It is regional when it has to be, as with the several nuclear-weapon- free zones recently concluded. And it is bilateral — even unilateral — when it has to be, as with the START Treaties and the several unilateral disarmament measures announced by Russia and the United States. This approach works. Let us not fool with it.

We all have a vital interest in nuclear disarmament. Draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.45 recognizes that interest and encourages it in a very practical way. It deserves the support of all members of the international community, and

on behalf of the Russian Federation and the United States, I ask for that support.

Mr. Al-Masaad (Qatar)(*interpretation from Arabic*): Since this is the first time I am speaking in the First Committee, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of this body. I am convinced that, given your diplomatic skills and knowledge of the issues before us, the work of this Committee will be fruitful. I am also pleased to extend congratulations to your fellow members of the Bureau and wish them every success.

The State of Qatar, together with many States of the Middle East, have on several occasions confirmed their commitment to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, in keeping with the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session on disarmament and the relevant General Assembly resolutions, the most recent of which is 50/66, adopted by consensus on 12 December 1995. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, particularly in tension areas such as the Middle East, is the result of countries' coming together to commit themselves to freeing their region of tensions. Such zones strengthen international efforts to achieve nuclear non-proliferation and pursue the objectives of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and are a major contribution to international peace and security. No one can deny the significant contribution to progress in nuclear disarmament of the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in Latin America and the Caribbean, the South Pacific, South-East Asia and, more recently, in Africa, following the signing on 11 April 1996 of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty.

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is in keeping with resolutions on the goals and principles of the NPT and nuclear disarmament adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the NPT, which affirmed that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones strengthens international peace and security. Pursuant to those resolutions, the State of Qatar supported the draft resolution adopting the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and was among the first to sign it.

The establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East is the responsibility of the States of the region. Arab States, in particular the State of Qatar, would welcome the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. All of those States are also Parties to the NPT and approved its extension for an indefinite period. Israel is the only State of the region that has failed to do so. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) conference of September 1995 highlighted the serious consequences for international peace and security of nuclear activities carried out in the Middle East not for exclusively peaceful purposes. That was a specific reference to Israel. Israel's adherence to the NPT and submission of all its nuclear facilities and installations to IAEA safeguards are vital to securing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region, especially since a new Government has come to power in Israel.

Such a zone is essential if the peace process is to progress towards the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region. It would lead to confidence-building in the region and to fruitful cooperation in all areas. It would further consolidate economic development, thus facilitating the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone covering the entire region. We have stressed the importance to the region's stability of establishing such a zone, given its contribution to peace and the economic and social stability of the region. The State of Qatar, under His Majesty the Emir of the State, has worked to strengthen its efforts and calls on other States to do their best to speed the establishment of such a zone in the region and to consider serious and mutually and effectively verifiable measures.

Mr. Parnohadiningrat (Indonesia): The opportunities for non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament opened by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) are being grasped by the international community. That has been fully reflected by the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in Africa and South-East Asia, the adherence to the Protocols of the Treaty of Rarotonga by France, the United Kingdom and the United States, and the conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Taken together, these constitute meaningful steps towards the eventual worldwide abolition of nuclear weapons.

It is to be recalled that, in 1982, Indonesia proposed the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South-East Asia as an essential component of the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality. Meanwhile, in cooperation with other members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and following a series of intense consultations, that proposal was finally consummated at the ASEAN Summit, held in Bangkok in December 1995, which adopted the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty. The Zone encompasses the territories of all States Parties to the Treaty as well as the maritime areas under their sovereignty and jurisdiction, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

The States concerned have undertaken to comply fully with the objectives and purposes of the Treaty, especially the commitments not to develop, manufacture or otherwise acquire, possess or control nuclear weapons and to utilize nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes under IAEA safeguards.

It is in this context that my delegation has decided to become a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.4/Rev.1. The States of the African continent, the South Pacific, South-East Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean share common interests and a firm determination to cooperate in transforming this large segment of the Earth's surface into a nuclear-free area and thereby to free themselves from the menace posed by nuclear weapons.

It is envisioned that the area of application would encompass the entire Southern Hemisphere and adjacent areas. Declaring such a vast expanse nuclear free would provide impetus for the establishment of such zones where they do not exist, leading ultimately to a denuclearized world. However, such legitimate interests and concerns can become a reality only with the concurrence of the nuclear Powers and their ratification of the relevant Protocols. Hence, operative paragraph 2 calls on the countries concerned to exert efforts and to facilitate the full realization of the objectives contained in these treaties. It is hoped that, consistent with their responsibilities for nuclear disarmament, the nuclear Powers will undertake the necessary actions to fulfil the legitimate aspirations of the States involved.

In my delegation's view, it is for these weighty reasons that the draft resolution on a nuclear-weapon-free Southern Hemisphere warrants the support of the Member States.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of South Africa to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.23.

Mr. Goosen (South Africa): South Africa is honoured to introduce the draft resolution contained in A/C.1/51/L.23 on the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, as submitted to the First Committee by the delegation of Burundi on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the African Group of States.

The successful conclusion of the signing ceremony of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (the Treaty of Pelindaba), which took place in Cairo on 11 April 1996, is one the most significant events to take place in the area of disarmament for Africa since the previous session of the First Committee. We are particularly pleased that four of the nuclear-weapon States signed the Protocol to the Treaty simultaneously with African States in Cairo, while the fifth has indicated that it will do so in the very near future.

The draft resolution calls upon African States to sign and ratify the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty as soon as possible so that the Treaty can enter into force without delay. Secondly, it expresses appreciation to the international community and in particular to the nuclear-weapon States that have signed the Protocols that concern them, and calls upon them to ratify the Protocols as soon as possible. It also calls upon the States contemplated in Protocol III to the Treaty to take all necessary measures to ensure the speedy application of the Treaty to territories for which they are, *de jure* or de facto, internationally responsible and which lie within the limits of the geographical zone established in the Treaty.

The Treaty reflects the common ideal of African countries to see our continent free of nuclear weapons and represents an achievement of which all Africans can rightfully be proud. It is our conviction that the Treaty of Pelindaba will serve to strengthen the international non-proliferation regime and encourage the establishment of additional nuclear-weapon-free zones in other parts of the world. It is furthermore a step in our common goal to rid our world of these weapons.

Previous resolutions on the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty have been adopted without a vote. The African Group of States commends this draft resolution to the First Committee and trusts that it will again be adopted by consensus.

While I am speaking, may South Africa express its support for draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.46, which we have also co-sponsored, on an international agreement to ban anti-personnel landmines, introduced by the United States on 4 November 1996. As representatives are aware, Africa is one of the continents which has suffered the most as a result of anti-personnel landmines. These terrible weapons have had a devastating effect on civil society after conflicts have ended and have placed severe constraints on reconstruction and development, particularly in rural areas. The scale of the problem is well known and the challenge it poses to our continent is extremely serious. South Africa is fully committed to ensuring the earliest possible conclusion of a legally binding international agreement to ban anti-personnel landmines.

The creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones in the world is a clear demonstration of the continued commitment of non-nuclear-weapon States to the goal of ridding the world of nuclear weapons. This has now been enhanced through the initiative of Brazil to promote the Southern Hemisphere and adjacent areas as a zone free from nuclear weapons. South Africa supports this initiative and has co-sponsored the draft resolution contained in A/C.1/51/L.4/Rev.1. With the addition of Antarctica, more than 50 per cent of the Earth's landmass will be covered by nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties — the treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok and Pelindaba.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Egypt to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.27.

Mr. Elaraby (Egypt): The delegation of Egypt has the honour to introduce, on behalf of States members of the League of Arab States, draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.27, under agenda item 74, which is entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East".

This draft text is based on the resolution adopted last year by the General Assembly under the same agenda item. It does, however, take into account the prevailing political environment in the Middle East. The most relevant developments are the accession of Djibouti on 22 August this year to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the decision of Oman to sign the NPT as soon as possible, as announced by the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Oman in his statement to the General Assembly on 1 October 1996. Such developments underline a basic fact in the Middle East, namely, that Israel has become the only State in the region which has neither acceded to the NPT nor declared its intention to do so in the foreseeable future.

The achievement of universal adherence to the NPT remains a cardinal priority not only for the States Parties; but also for the international community as a whole. Universality consolidates the edifice of the NPT regime. This was underscored in the Treaty itself and was subsequently confirmed by the decision on principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament adopted on 11 May 1995 by the Conference of the Parties to the NPT, as well as by the provisions of the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Treaty. It is for these reasons that we consider Israel's refusal to accede to the NPT as an impediment to the realization of the lofty objective of attaining universal adherence to the Treaty.

Needless to say, the continuation of such an unbalanced situation cannot but further aggravate serious security concerns regarding the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East. It will undermine the efforts deployed by various regional and extraregional parties aimed at establishing confidence-building measures, in particular those efforts aimed at the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East as the cornerstone for the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

In a volatile region such as the Middle East, peacemaking deserves our collective support. When the foundations of peace have been laid down, it is our common responsibility to build upon these agreements to allow them to widen and spill over into other areas, hence contributing to defusing tension. With this view in mind, we must underscore that the Arab strategic option of achieving a just and comprehensive peace requires that Israel make a corresponding commitment, and that this commitment be seriously and scrupulously confirmed in accordance with the principles agreed upon at the Madrid Conference, in particular the principle of land for peace, and the faithful fulfillment of commitments, undertakings or agreements made in that framework. Reneging on commitments is unacceptable as well as illegal.

This draft resolution, contained in document A/C.1/51/L.27, consists of 10 preambular paragraphs and five operative ones. I will only call attention to the new changes that have been introduced. In the new seventh preambular paragraph, the General Assembly notes with satisfaction that since the adoption of the resolution on the Middle East on 11 May 1995 by the Conference of the Parties to the NPT, Djibouti and the United Arab Emirates have become parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and that Oman will become a party to the Treaty at the earliest date. In the new eighth preambular paragraph, the General Assembly notes with concern that Israel will be the only State in the Middle East — and this is a reality: the only State in the Middle East — that has not yet become a party to the NPT and has not declared its intention to do so. In the new ninth preambular paragraph, the General Assembly expresses its concern about threats posed to security and stability by the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the region. And in the updated tenth preambular paragraph — which was the seventh preambular paragraph of resolution 50/73 adopted last year — the General Assembly stresses the importance of undertaking confidence-building measures, in particular the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the

Middle East, in order to consolidate the non-proliferation regime and enhance peace and security in the region.

As for the operative part, the General Assembly welcomes, in an updated paragraph 1, the accession of Djibouti to the NPT and the decision of Oman, as expressed by the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Oman, to accede to the Treaty. In an updated paragraph 2, the General Assembly calls upon Israel, the only State in the Middle East region that is not yet party to the NPT and has not yet declared its intention to do so, to accede to the Treaty without further delay; not to develop, produce, test or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons; and to renounce possession of nuclear weapons.

The General Assembly also calls upon Israel, in an updated paragraph 3, to place all unsafeguarded nuclear facilities under full-scope International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards as an important confidence-building measure among all States of the region and as a step towards enhancing peace and security.

Allow me to conclude by stating that the purpose of this draft resolution is simple and straightforward. It is to faithfully reflect the realities in the Middle East — the realities as they now exist. The draft resolution underscores the basic facts as we live them in the region: that following the decisions of Djibouti and Oman, Israel remains the only State in the region that is not yet or will not soon be a party to the NPT. This is a fact that cannot be challenged. Israel has not declared its intention to become a party to the NPT.

I believe that States of the area are justified and entitled to put questions to the international community. Are we expected to ignore realities and use what might be described as the ostrich approach, hiding our heads in the vast sand dunes of the Middle East? To whose interest would that be? It would not promote peace, stability or security. Or are we to conclude that in the Middle East, and only in the Middle East, double standards can be applied?

A few years ago, and as a token of our support for collective efforts, the title of this item was changed from "Israeli nuclear armament" to "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East". This change by itself highlights the conceptual change from confrontation to confidence-building; this draft resolution does not aim at creating a confrontation between any delegations here. Now it is Israel's turn to make a positive gesture by joining all other States of the region in acceding to the NPT and adhering to the non-proliferation regime.

Egypt, on behalf of the States Members of the League of Arab States, hopes that this draft resolution will receive the overwhelming support of Member States. For this purpose — to make it possible for this draft resolution to receive the overwhelming support of members of this Committee — we have been and still are conducting intensive consultations with all the interested parties. We hope that our discussions will lead to a positive outcome at the beginning of next week.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Togo, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.26/Rev.1.

Mr. Afeto (Togo) (*interpretation from French*): I have the honour of introducing, on behalf of the African Group, draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.26/Rev.1, entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa".

This draft resolution, drawn up by the African Group under agenda item 72 (d), "Review and implementation of the Concluding Document of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly", has been submitted by Burundi on behalf of 53 African States.

Established by the General Assembly under resolution 40/151 G of 16 December 1985 and inaugurated 24 October 1986 on the forty-first anniversary of the United Nations, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament, based in Lomé, Togo, has as its fundamental mission to supply African States, upon their request, with functional support for initiatives they would like to undertake to promote peace, development, disarmament and arms limitation on the national and regional levels. With this mission, the Centre has distributed information on these issues to Governments, students, teachers, researchers and other people and entities with an interest in problems of disarmament and development. It has also organized many seminars, held conferences and conducted studies, including on the causes of conflicts and on the problems of borders in Africa.

During the last 12 months, and unlike in 1994 and 1995, the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, despite its still limited resources, organized seminars and disseminated information throughout the regions and districts of Togo. It did so with assistance from the United Nations Information Centre and with technical support from the United Nations Development Programme

(UNDP) in Lomé, and with the cooperation of the Togo Federation of Associations and the Clubs of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

It also lent its technical and administrative support to the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa and participated in activities conducted by the United Nations Secretary-General aimed at finding solutions to problems resulting from the proliferation of light arms in the Saharo-Sahelian subregion.

The Centre has also been involved in distributing its quarterly publication — *The Africa Peace Bulletin* — as widely as possible. It is published in French and in English and covers new developments in the area of disarmament and peace in Africa.

All information on and programmes of activities of the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa is contained in the report of the Secretary-General of 25 September 1996 (A/51/403).

The Secretary-General's report reveals that the Lomé Centre's programme of activities is quite far-ranging and is in keeping with the mandate given it upon its creation by the General Assembly. However, it emerges from the report that the Centre's financial situation, which improved slightly during 1996, remains a source of concern.

The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.26/Rev.1, which I am submitting today for the Committee's consideration, believe that peace and security know no price. They believe, moreover, that the Regional Centre must play a primary role in helping to check this scourge, as their respective States are confronted with the phenomenon of the uncontrolled proliferation and illicit transfer of small arms.

In operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution, the sponsors express their firm support for the further operation and strengthening of the Centre and encourage it to continue intensifying its efforts in order to develop effective measures of confidence-building, arms limitation and disarmament.

An appeal is made in operative paragraph 4 to all Member States — mainly to African countries — to international governmental and non-governmental organizations and foundations to make regular and appropriate contributions to the special trust fund created to help the Centre cope with the problems of financing, in order to revitalize the Centre, strengthen its programmes of activities and facilitate the effective implementation of such programmes.

Operative paragraph 5 requests the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts in exploring new means for the adequate financing of the Centre's activities.

The sponsors believe that in order to allow the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa to obtain more constructive results in future, it would be preferable for the Centre's Director to be, as far as possible and within existing resources, locally based. This is all the more urgent and justified since the Government of Togo is making available, at no cost to the United Nations and at its own expense, two buildings: one to house the Centre and its various services and the other to serve as a residence for the Director and the members of his or her family.

The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.26/Rev.1, in the light of all these considerations, request Member States to show their serious concern for the Centre's problems by providing it with the material and financial means that it needs to update, expand and effectively carry out its mandate, in accordance with the wish expressed by the Secretary-General in his report.

This is an important issue, and, for that reason, the sponsors hope that it will be given due attention by all delegations. They hope also that draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.26/Rev.1 will be adopted again this year without a vote, as was the case last year.

Mr. Rider (New Zealand): New Zealand is pleased to take this opportunity to speak in support of the draft resolution introduced earlier this afternoon by the Ambassador of Brazil, that is, the draft entitled "The nuclear-weapon-free Southern Hemisphere and adjacent areas", which is attached to the text of the Brazilian intervention and which will appear shortly as document A/C.4/51/L.4/Rev.1.

As a sponsor of the draft resolution, I should like to thank the Brazilian delegation for the work they have put into bringing this draft resolution before the First Committee, and particularly for their efforts in coordinating the work of the core group that worked on the draft. New Zealand also worked closely with Brazil on the draft resolution, and I should like to take this opportunity to outline some of the thinking behind the initiative.

Nuclear-weapon-free zones have, in recent times, made some considerable advances. The 10 countries of the South-East Asian region signed the Treaty of Bangkok in December last year. The African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty was opened for signature in April of this year. In my own region, the South Pacific, France, the United Kingdom and the United States have joined the Russian Federation and China in signing the Protocols to the Treaty of Rarotonga. These actions, and France's subsequent ratification of the Protocols, are much appreciated by South Pacific States.

These developments are noteworthy, and several countries — including New Zealand — saw an opportunity to build on the progress nuclear-weapon-free zones have made. While the provisions of the four Treaties are not identical and reflect the different regions and the different circumstances in which they were drafted, they all have as their core a prohibition on the acquisition, manufacturing, testing and stationing of nuclear weapons.

Nuclear-weapon-free zones now cover most of the southern hemisphere and significant parts of the northern hemisphere, and enjoy widespread support, both from regional States and from the nuclear-weapon States. We believe there is scope to develop political links between zones and to have that concept endorsed by the wider international community, thus reinforcing progress towards nuclear disarmament.

The New Zealand Prime Minister therefore welcomed Brazil's initiative to introduce, at this year's session of the General Assembly, a draft resolution on cooperation between nuclear-weapon-free zones. We see the draft resolution as a chance to further existing efforts to establish political linkages between the members of the zones in order to promote and enhance our core and shared objectives.

This process will give us an opportunity to make a real contribution to nuclear disarmament, marking a further development in the role of nuclear-weapon-free zones, following their endorsement last year at the Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Let me dwell for a moment on what this draft resolution does not do, to try to dispel some concerns I have heard expressed. It does not try to extend or undermine international law through the vehicle of United Nations resolutions. In particular, there is no intention that the zones or their effects should impinge upon established international maritime law. That is made quite specific in the fifth preamoular paragraph. We want instead to look at ways we can work together to further our shared objectives and to consolidate the status of the nuclear-weapon-free zone regimes that now cover much of the globe, including most of the southern hemisphere.

Nor does the text attempt to pre-empt the outcome of current negotiations between one zone and the nuclear-weapon States. Operative paragraph 2 specifically recognizes this as an ongoing process and endorses it. We all hope that discussions have a fruitful outcome. Nor does this draft resolution lay the responsibility for follow-up on the already overburdened Secretariat or on the Secretary-General.

Operative paragraph 5 makes it very clear that we members of existing zones are ourselves responsible for carrying forward our desire for future cooperative efforts. In that sense, this draft resolution is a useful model for the First Committee to consider in future since it lays responsibility on the Member States concerned and not, as has usually been the tradition, on the United Nations.

New Zealand's objective during the drafting process has been to seek a text that would enable the draft resolution to gain maximum support without compromising its objectives. That would give the draft the weight we think it deserves. I would encourage all delegations to give favourable consideration to this text. As the outcome of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons made clear, the issue of nuclear-free zones is one of relevance to all countries. We look forward to the support of members of this Committee.

Mr. Yativ (Israel): Let me first present some of Israel's comments on draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.28 entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East", which has just been introduced.

As the members of this Committee are fully aware, Israel has for the past decade joined the consensus on the issue of nuclear-weapon-free zones in the Middle East. It did so because it identifies with the goal of establishing such a zone in the Middle East in due course. We have retained our position over the years while dissociating ourselves from the modalities contained in the draft resolution and maintaining serious reservations on its language and substance.

This year, draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.28 constitutes a drastic departure from the consensus language on which Israel's support was based. The new text is, in effect, a new draft resolution that calls for a new position.

I do not wish to elaborate on each change that was introduced. However, I do wish to make one fundamental remark in order to convey Israel's concern and apprehension. Israel's position has always been that the nuclear issue should be dealt with in the full context of the peace process in the Middle East, as well as within the context of all security problems, conventional and non-conventional. This has been a rudimentary concern on which our consideration was based.

The present draft includes several changes in the text that give it another direction. The strong reference to the importance of the peace process has been drastically diluted. Hence, we believe that such changes will adversely affect the peacemaking efforts in the Middle East and thus upset the delicate balance on which the consensus is based.

Israel continues to support the establishment, in due course, of a mutually verifiable nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, after peace is sealed. Thus, the text of the resolution that was adopted during the fiftieth session of the General Assembly should remain unchanged if consensus is to be maintained. Support for this position will greatly help in maintaining consensus on this item this year as well.

I wish to add only a brief remark on draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.27, entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East". This draft resolution is, regrettably, on the agenda of this Committee once again. It should have been removed from the agenda long ago on account of its negative political motive and in view of the fact that its substance is devoid of any subject not included in other resolutions. Therefore, I will not go into any substantive analysis of this draft resolution.

The draft resolution, as introduced today, represents an upgraded version of a negative attitude. On the one hand, my delegation has noticed a further proliferation of Israel's name in the text, thus escalating the singling out of my country. We have also noticed a deliberate omission of any reference to the peace process, which appeared in last year's text. Hence, I note with regret that this annual ritual has reached a new level. The continued arraignment and name-calling of Israel in this draft resolution does not serve the cause of peace and will no doubt have a detrimental effect on political developments in the Middle East.

We therefore call upon all those who supported or abstained on that resolution to vote against the draft and thus extend a helping hand to the peacemaking efforts in the Middle East.

Mr. Aguirre de Carcer (Spain) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I should like make a brief statement on draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.46 on "An international agreement to ban anti-personnel landmines".

Spain wishes to join the already large number of countries that have indicated their intention to sponsor this draft resolution. My delegation had not yet announced its intention to become a cosponsor because the draft resolution made no reference to the need to determine the most appropriate international forum for the negotiation of such an international agreement. During the discussions on the final text of this draft resolution, many delegations asked that this additional factor be included.

Despite these flaws, Spain firmly supports the objective of the total elimination of anti-personnel landmines and has been working with the other members of the European Union to arrive at an effective international agreement on a global ban on anti-personnel landmines as soon as possible. To that end, my delegation would like sponsoring this draft resolution formally to join the many countries that share this objective.

Without prejudice to additional efforts that may be made in other forums, we wish to highlight what we see as the importance of the selection of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva as the most appropriate forum for continuing work on negotiating a legally binding agreement on a total ban on anti-personnel landmines.

Besides the Conference on Disarmament's function as the sole worldwide multilateral disarmament negotiating body, we believe that it is the only forum that can contribute to achieving as quickly as possible, the level of universality required to deal with this serious problem, which affects many countries on all continents. As the Permanent Representative of the United States pointed out just a few days ago in this Committee, the problems created by the wrongful use of anti-personnel landmines can be tackled only globally, and this objective should be shared by all Governments and all nations.

My delegation would like also to support the comments made by the representatives of Finland and France when they emphasized that we should work towards

an effective agreement that, consequently, should include appropriate provisions on verification of compliance.

Mr. Berdennikov (Russian Federation)(*interpretation from Russian*): Today our delegation would like to raise one of the important issues discussed in the First Committee: the ban on the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel landmines.

The Russian Federation is in favour of gradual progress towards this ultimate goal. A major step in this direction has already been taken: on 3 May 1996 in Geneva, Russia and other participants in the Review Conference of States parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, adopted amended Protocol II on mines by consensus. The agreement was based on a careful balance of the interests of all participants in the Conference, with due regard to the current situation, the real capabilities of the parties and their security and self-defence interests.

On the basis of the same position of principle, Russia became a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.40, which was introduced by Sweden. We believe that this draft resolution is aimed at achieving the main immediate objective: the entry into force of the Protocol, strengthening its authority and making it as universal as possible. This would provide an opportunity to move forward resolutely and predictably by consistently and gradually intensifying efforts in this direction. However, we believe that any attempts to achieve a hasty ban on mines, to mention the conclusion of negotiations that have not yet started and even to set out a timetable for their completion will only complicate this already complex issue. This would give the impression that attempts are being made to revise the agreement reached last May in Geneva.

Russia, no less than other countries, understands the humanitarian element of this problem. We share feelings of solidarity with the innocent victims of anti-personnel landmines, which have been expressed here in many statements. We believe that this solidarity should be demonstrated not only in words but in deeds. Mine clearance efforts should be intensified, and moratoriums on the export of anti-personnel landmines should be imposed and maintained. That is why we are proposing the establishment of international cooperation in mine clearance as an important integral part of resolving the complex challenge of post-conflict settlement.

The United Nations has a key role to play in coordinating the efforts of States and regional organizations to implement mine-clearance programmes. The problem of mine clearance is also urgent and pressing in the zones of conflict in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, primarily in Abkhazia, Georgia. However, proposals for an immediate and complete ban on production, stockpiling and use of anti-personnel landmines give rise to a number of questions, some of which I would like to refer to.

First, how much will the cost of guarding frontiers increase if anti-personnel landmines are banned without adequate substitutes particularly at "hot spots" where, virtually every day, bandit groups make incursions from foreign territory? How many of the troops guarding those frontiers will lose their lives? Will not such a ban diminish the reliability of the protection of nuclear and other facilities that are dangerous or highly vulnerable to terrorists, particularly in circumstances where there is still no viable alternative to anti-personnel landmines? Will it not result in a situation in which the forces of law and order and lawful armed units are deprived of the possibility of using anti-personnel landmines, while illegal and mafia-like terrorist structures gain a kind of monopoly over them?

Secondly, will not the blanket, ill-prepared banning of anti-personnel landmines lead to a leap in the profitability of the underground mine business? If, as is often said, one anti-personnel landmine now costs $5, will not its price on the black market increase many times as a result of the ban, with a corresponding increase in the profitability of production, supply and so on? What forces and resources will be required effectively to combat such a profitable underground business? How much will it cost, for example, to verify that any workshop producing accessories for fireworks does not at the same time engage in the illegal production and sale of anti-personnel landmines?

Thirdly, how will it be possible to verify the ban on anti-personnel landmine production, especially when there is, for example, no ban on the production, stockpiling and use of anti-tank mines? Where and how will the demarcation line be drawn? What kind of on-site inspections should be provided for in order to make sure that a munition plant does not produce anti-personnel landmines, without jeopardizing the production of other legitimate items in such a plant? How will it be possible to verify the absence of anti-personnel landmines but not of other types of mines in military munition depots and military units? Will not such a verification system be much

more cumbersome, costly and intrusive than the verification system provided for in the Chemical Weapons Convention?

I should mention that we noticed that during the current debate some delegations stated that an agreement on anti-personnel landmines should be a simple one and not provide for complicated verification mechanisms. In our view, this means only one thing: that the ban is perceived as totally unverifiable, since a simple and inexpensive verification of such a complicated ban is totally inconceivable. We must have the answers to these and other questions before we sit at the negotiating table and start drafting the text of an agreement on a relevant ban.

In this context we believe that the use of the Conference on Disarmament as a forum to discuss the issue of mines is a feasible option, and we are open to it. The Conference provides an opportunity for an in-depth analysis and discussion of these issues, which clearly cannot be achieved in a short diplomatic meeting. However, the specific subjects for and timetable of the discussions at the Conference on Disarmament should be decided taking into account the entire group of problems that may soon be proposed for discussion there.

The other option under discussion — namely, to hold a special meeting of the countries concerned to agree upon the text of a "simple" agreement, and have its results endorsed by the General Assembly — would be a road leading nowhere. In the long term it would deal a blow not only to the goal of the anti-personnel landmine ban, but to the entire negotiating machinery in the field of disarmament.

The Ottawa meeting, held in October 1996, showed what sort of participation can be expected. Forcing through a anti-personnel landmine ban outside and contrary to normal procedures and mechanisms for working out global agreements in the field of disarmament is not acceptable to us. Moreover, it is hard to imagine that the major Powers could accede to an agreement drafted without their participation.

In this connection, the Russian delegation understands the arguments advanced by our Indian, French and Finnish counterparts in support of the Conference on Disarmament and a phased solution of the outstanding issues. Such a phased approach would mean that the first step would be the entry into force of the amended Protocol II on mines and widening adherence to it, followed by agreement on stricter limitations.

It is regrettable that these fundamentally important arguments relating to the eventual role of the Conference on Disarmament and a phased progression towards the ultimate goal were not reflected in draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.46, which also failed to take into account the amendments proposed by the Russian delegation to the sponsors. Given these circumstances, we are firm in stating that, in conformity with our instructions, we will not be able to endorse or consent to a consensus with regard to that draft resolution, which ignores the Russian proposals.

We believe that, in the end, only general agreement, taking into account positions and legitimate interests on security issues as well as the real capabilities of all countries and regions, will make it possible to achieve solutions that would genuinely serve to strengthen universal, international security and trust as regards anti-personnel landmines.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Poland to introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/51/L.48 and A/C.1/51/L.25.

Mr. Dembinski (Poland): I should like to introduce two draft resolutions. On behalf of Poland and Canada, I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/51/L.48, entitled "Status of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction", which is also sponsored by India and Mexico. I might add that, in accordance with a years-long tradition, Poland and Canada used to alternate every year in preparing and submitting such a draft resolution on behalf of the sponsors. As the tradition also had it, those draft resolutions used to command the universal support of the Assembly and were adopted without a vote. It may be recalled that this was not the case at either the forty-ninth or fiftieth sessions of the General Assembly, when draft resolutions on chemical weapons could not be, and were not, acted upon by the General Assembly.

The situation with regard to draft resolutions on chemical weapons at the fifty-first session of the General Assembly is fundamentally changed. With the required 65 instruments of ratification deposited late last month, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction will go into effect in late April 1997. At that moment, an entire category of weapons of mass destruction will have been banned, and the risk to mankind of renewed use of these horrendous, inhumane weapons

will have been eliminated. At that moment, the Chemical Weapons Convention will have become part and parcel of international law.

The sponsors of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.I/51/L.48 consider that at that moment the chemical weapons implementation mechanism at The Hague must be ready and fully prepared to cope with its responsibilities. They also stress the importance of the further increase in the number of original parties to the Convention.

The sponsors have recognized that in 1996 the time has come for the General Assembly to pronounce itself on the subject of chemical weapons and to adopt, hopefully by consensus, a resolution addressing the relevant issues. It is in an effort to reach a meeting of minds of all concerned that, thanks to your understanding and indulgence, Mr. Chairman, and those of the Bureau, we have been able to pursue our consultations past the agreed deadline. I need hardly add that efforts to have only one draft resolution acted upon in the First Committee and to have it approved without a vote will continue up to the last moment.

In conclusion, I should like to pay special tribute to the delegations involved in the difficult and often frustrating efforts to produce one agreed draft chemical weapons resolution. The determination, goodwill and flexibility that they invariably demonstrated should be recognized and appreciated, as should the constructive role that they played in the search for delicate balance and language acceptable to most delegations. On behalf of the sponsors of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/51/L.48, I commend it for approval without a vote.

In my capacity as President of the Conference on Disarmament, I should like to introduce a draft resolution on the report of the Conference on Disarmament, which is contained in document A/C.1/51/L.25. At the outset, I should like to observe that, following intensive consultations, and in order to obtain the approval of the draft resolution without a vote, we have decided to drop the last preambular paragraph from the draft. The revised text of the draft resolution will be issued shortly. While strictly procedural, the draft resolution seeks to bring out the importance of the Conference on Disarmament as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community. It welcomes the recent expansion in the Conference's membership and encourages it to continue further to review that question.

The draft resolution also encourages the Conference on Disarmament to make every effort to reach, at the outset of its 1997 session, a decision on its agenda and programme of work. I commend the draft resolution in document A/C.1/51/L.25, as orally amended, for approval without a vote.

Mr. De Icaza (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): As the depository country for the Treaty of Tlatelolco banning nuclear arms at the regional level, Mexico is pleased to co-sponsor the draft resolution introduced today by the delegation of Brazil on the nuclear-weapon-free Southern Hemisphere and adjacent areas, contained in document A/C.1/51/L.4/Rev.1.

We have been firm promoters of the establishment and strengthening of nuclear-weapon-free zones which, as stated in the preamble to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, are not an end in themselves but rather a means for achieving general and complete disarmament, an obligation that was unanimously recalled by the International Court of Justice. The General Assembly, at its first special session on disarmament, encouraged:

> "The process of establishing such zones in different parts of the world ... with the ultimate objective of achieving a world entirely free of nuclear weapons." (*resolution S-10/2, para. 61*)

We would highlight the importance of paragraph 4 of the draft before us, which calls upon the States parties and signatories to the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Raratonga, Bangkok and Pelindaba to explore and implement further ways and means of cooperation, including the consolidation of the status of the nuclear-weapon-free Southern Hemisphere and adjacent areas.

We understand the concept of cooperation, in its broadest sense, to include both the contracting parties to the various Treaties and the bodies set up under such instruments in the regular exchange of information and experience. We are convinced that these new means of cooperation will advance the ultimate goal of such Treaties, which, as I said, can only be that of attaining nuclear disarmament.

Allow me, in conclusion, to emphasize the fact that nothing in the draft resolution affects the norms and principles of international law that are applicable to the maritime area. We would urge all delegations to support draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.4/Rev.1, introduced by the delegation of Brazil today.

Mr. Deimundo (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The delegation of Argentina would like to refer to the draft resolution introduced earlier by the delegation of Brazil, entitled "The nuclear-weapon-free Southern Hemisphere and adjacent areas".

As a sponsor of the draft resolution, which is annexed to the statement recently made and circulated by the representative of Brazil, I would note that it is the outcome of intensive consultations among the sponsors. These consultations were quite intensive, as it was necessary to reach consensus on the draft resolution. We believe that the new fifth preambular paragraph and the new operative paragraph 2 seek to reconcile contradictory positions.

The delegation of Argentina hopes that this draft resolution will be supported unanimously by this Committee.

Mr. Al-Hariri (Syrian Arab Republic) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The draft resolution introduced by the Ambassador of Egypt under agenda item 67, entitled the "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East" and contained in document A/C.1/51/L.28, is of great importance to all countries of the region and of the world.

The establishment of such zones is indispensable to eliminating the risk of nuclear proliferation in an area that has experienced long-standing conflicts. Such a risk may persist if a single State continues to possess an arsenal of nuclear weapons, is not a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and refuses to submit its nuclear installations to the full-scope safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency. These safeguards are an important confidence-building measure for all the nations of the region and enhance international peace and security. Israel's refusal to submit to them hinders the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The international community and the General Assembly have supported this position since 1980 through the adoption by consensus of the resolution on the establishment of such a zone.

The international community is tending, in the light of the international changes taking place, to eliminate nuclear weapons through the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in several regions of the world, such as Latin America and elsewhere. In the Middle East, Israel is the only State preventing the establishment of such a zone, thus threatening international peace and security, in particular given the setbacks in the peace process created by Israel's failure to respect commitments concluded during previous stages of that process. This is impeding the establishment of a just and lasting peace based on the principle of "land for peace". Israel is continuing to misrepresent reality, failing to respect its commitments and distorting the truth. The peace process is being blocked by Israeli practices, which are hampering the implementation of a resolution on a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

In its preambular and operative parts, the draft resolution before us emphasizes realities that cannot be denied or ignored but which we must seriously consider. It is not new, as some have claimed. The amendments made by the Egyptian Ambassador during his introduction on the draft resolution, in which he singled out Israel by name, reflect the reality that Israel is the only recalcitrant party and simply strengthens the language of the draft resolution.

My country attaches the greatest importance to the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, a measure that is indispensable for nuclear disarmament and to promoting the possibility of peace and international security. We hope that the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus, as in the past.

Mr. Karem (Egypt): A few moments ago, the Permanent Representative of Egypt, Ambassador Elaraby, introduced draft resolutions A/C.1/51/L.24 and A/C.1/51/L.28. We listened — with great interest, I must admit — to what was said by the representative of Israel, Ambassador Yativ, in his remarks on A/C.1/51/L.28.

I must admit at this stage that the statement of the representative of Israel surprised me in many regards and caused me a little bit of dismay on two grounds. First of all, in its presentation, this delegation made a few important conciliatory oral amendments to resolution A/C.1/51/L.28. Nevertheless, it seems that insufficient time was given to digest the importance and assess the significance of the Egyptian delegation's conciliatory remarks and amendments to this draft resolution. It is in that respect that we announce that revision 1 will soon be released; my delegation, I believe, presented the new amendments to the Secretariat.

We have announced that there is an ongoing process of negotiations and consultations with all, intra-regional as well as extra-regional parties — if not neighbours and partners — as we proceed towards the conclusion of the negotiations on this draft resolution. So I do not think that it is at all healthy to negotiate this draft resolution from the floor. I think what we need at this stage is quiet diplomacy

and an open mind. I do not think that what has been mentioned by my friend Ambassador Yativ augurs well for what I have just mentioned.

Secondly, I find myself somewhat puzzled by certain things he said in his intervention. He mentioned that Israel has supported relevant draft resolutions on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone for the last decade. Actually, the consensus on such draft resolutions goes back to 1980. If my memory serves me correctly, the first draft resolution in this area was introduced and inscribed on the agenda of the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly in 1974. The farthest Israel went in voting on the draft resolution, before it was adopted by consensus in 1980, was an abstention.

They have argued on historical grounds that for the draft resolution on this subject to be implemented they needed to underscore that they should not be the first to introduce nuclear weapons to the Middle East. Secondly, they needed direct negotiations with the parties. Well, direct negotiations started in 1977 between Egypt and Israel. As a result of our 1979 peace treaty with them, it became possible for the draft resolution to be adopted by consensus in 1980. I think it is in our interest to preserve and build on the consensus on the resolution.

It is in that respect that I actually find myself perplexed in trying to understand what we really mean by saying that Israel supports the draft resolution but dissociates itself from the modalities. If we measure such a statement against a long period of support — from 1974 until now — I find myself at a total loss. I also find myself somewhat confused by language such as "after peace is sealed". What do we really mean by peace being sealed? Can we put that in operational terms, or is that one additional alibi, if I may call it that, or precondition or caveat being placed on the long process of putting this initiative into operational terms, to implement the relevant resolutions?

We have supported the relevant resolutions for a long time; we have long had agreed language on them; we have adopted them by consensus since 1974; we have had paragraph 63 (d), of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, in 1978, agreed to by all the parties. What is left is the political will of the parties to put the resolution in operational terms — not necessarily by beginning with direct negotiations, though we are ready to do so.

The least we can do at this stage is to begin a structured discussion. Even a structured discussion on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East is not agreed to by Israel. I am not talking about negotiations; I am speaking of a structured discussion. If we take an example from the African initiative, for example, it is noteworthy that the initiative was started in 1964 and culminated, as the representative of South Africa mentioned, in Cairo on 11 April of this year, after a very long period of time.

Egypt is willing to work hand in hand with all the parties concerned, but we need to start a process of structured discussion.

Before concluding, let me just refer to another remark which was made by the representative of Israel. With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.27, on the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East, he stated that there was a deliberate omission of reference to the peace process. Let me just state that the deliberate omission was made because the original, previous language said "encouraged by the recent positive developments" in the peace process. If we are speaking in 1996, in the light of the developments since the last session of the General Assembly, it is not at all possible to use the same language because, unfortunately, history attests to the contrary of that statement, and we have to be realistic.

I will, however, end with a question to our Israeli friends and colleagues. If they like references so very much, and if they so much dislike the omission, would the insertion of a mention of the peace process in A/C.1/51/L.27 make them change their minds? I wonder.

The Chairman (*interpretation from Russian*): There are no further speakers. We have thus concluded the introduction and consideration of draft resolutions submitted on all disarmament and security agenda items.

The Chairman (*interpretation from Russian*): I call now on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): I would like to inform the Committee that the following countries have become sponsors of the following draft resolutions:

A/C.1/51/L.1/Rev.1: Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Guatemala, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom;

A/C.1/51/L.2: Bangladesh, Cuba, Croatia, Estonia, Iceland, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Luxembourg, Mauritius, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Slovenia and Spain;

A/C.1/51/L.4: Benin, Fiji, Grenada, Guyana, Kenya, Liberia, Namibia, Sierra Leone, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, the United Republic of Tanzania, Vanuatu, Zaire and Zimbabwe;

A/C.1/51/L.8: Kenya, South Africa and Sri Lanka;

A/C.1/51/L.9: Guatemala;

A/C.1/51/L.10: Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, New Zealand, Philippines and Thailand;

A/C.1/51/L.16: Bangladesh, Belgium, France, Germany, India, the United Kingdom and Zaire;

A/C.1/51/L.17: Australia, Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Venezuela;

A/C.1/51/L.18: Congo, El Salvador, Liberia and Zaire;

A/C.1/51/L.19/Rev.1: Bangladesh and Lesotho;

A/C.1/51/L.20/Rev.1: Bangladesh, Kenya and Singapore;

A/C.1/51/L.24: Monaco and Mongolia;

A/C.1/51/L.30: Cuba, Guatemala and Zaire;

A/C.1/51/L.31: Congo, Liberia and Zaire;

A/C.1/51/L.32: Bangladesh, Botswana, China, Congo; Guatemala, Kenya, Liberia, Mongolia, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Thailand and Zaire;

A/C.1/51/L.33: Morocco and Turkey;

A/C.1/51/L.34: Australia, Guatemala, Iceland, Luxembourg and the Republic of Korea;

A/C.1/51/L.35: Benin, Japan, Liberia and Zaire;

A/C.1/51/L.36: Bangladesh, Chile, Egypt, Estonia; Iceland, Lithuania, Nigeria, Qatar and Sri Lanka;

A/C.1/51/L.37: Afghanistan, Brazil, Guyana, India, Iraq, Nigeria, Paraguay, San Marino, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and the United Republic of Tanzania;

A/C.1/51/L.38: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Denmark, Lesotho, Malta, New Zealand, Niger, the Republic of Moldova, Sweden and Uruguay;

A/C.1/51/L.39: Lesotho;

A/C.1/51/L.40: Bangladesh, Belarus, Malta, Monaco, Mongolia, Panama and Paraguay;

A/C.1/51/L.42: Austria, Belgium, Congo, Denmark, Italy, Luxembourg and Zaire;

A/C.1/51/L.43: Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cuba, Mongolia, Myanmar and Nigeria;

A/C.1/51/L.44: Zaire;

A/C.1/51/L.45: Monaco;

A/C.1/51/L.46: Australia, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Finland, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Monaco, Mongolia, Panama, Paraguay, Spain, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Turkmenistan and Zaire;

A/C.1/51/L.47: Afghanistan, Iceland, Japan, Malta, Monaco and the United States of America;

In addition, there are several minor editorial changes in certain draft resolutions on which the Committee will be taking action on Monday, and I should like to read them out at this stage.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of India on a point of order.

Ms. Ghose (India): I think what we are trying to do is to get a text on which we are going to vote. There is no way in which I am going to be able to take down a revised text hurriedly and then vote on trust. It is not that I have a problem with any text. Either the Secretariat should issue a revised document or the Secretary should read out the changes extremely slowly so that we can take them down and consider them before we go to a vote. But at the

moment, I am sorry: I do not think I am in a position to listen to a changed text read out from the podium and then come back on Monday ready to vote on it.

The Chairman: I would ask the Secretary of the Committee to comment on this issue.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): In view of the comment made by the representative of India, it seems appropriate that the Secretariat should issue an information paper containing all the minor editorial changes that will not affect the substantive matter in the draft resolutions. Because of the current financial situation, reissuing a whole document because of a very minor change such as adding the article "the" would impose a substantial financial burden; therefore, we shall issue a very simple information paper that will contain these very minor changes for the proceedings next week.

Mr. de Icaza (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): We are grateful to the Secretariat for its cooperation in helping us be in a position to vote on the draft resolutions. If I have understood correctly, the Secretariat will be circulating a paper with the editorial changes. I hope that the paper will be made available in all languages and will cover all draft resolutions. My delegation, of course, would not be in a position to vote if it does not have the translation into its own language and does not know exactly what it is voting on.

The Chairman: I assure members that this information paper will be distributed in all languages.

Mr. Malzahn (United States): I was wondering if we might have some idea of what time this paper will be available tomorrow.

The Chairman: The paper will be available in the afternoon.

Ms. Ghose (India): Where will members be able to get the paper? When the Committee is not meeting, the document window in the conference room is closed; we have been having extreme difficulty in getting copies of the draft resolutions.

The Chairman: I am informed by the Secretariat that the informal document will be available tomorrow afternoon at the documents distribution centre, which is situated in the basement.

Mr. Berdennikov (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): I must admit that I am now somewhat confused. We were first talking about an information document, now we are talking about some kind of informal, unofficial document. We are adopting official resolutions; this is a rather important matter. To adopt them on the basis of an unofficial document is something new in our practice.

The Chairman: The document will be an information document, not an informal document.

Mr. Mesdoua (Algeria) (*interpretation from French*): I know that it is late and that delegations are tired. However, please allow my delegation, in its capacity as the coordinator on draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.33, entitled "Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region", to thank the Secretariat for all the work they have done.

I am speaking here four days after a revision was to have been made to the seventh preambular paragraph of the Arabic text. My delegation, while taking note of the revision, hopes that in the future when changes are made to draft resolutions those changes will be reflected in the documentation within 24 hours at the most. We therefore hope that the new Arabic text of draft resolution A/C.1/51/L.33 will be made available very quickly.

The Chairman: The Secretariat will take note of the comment made by the representative of Algeria.

Programme of work

The Chairman (*interpretation from Russian*): In accordance with our programme of work, tomorrow we are to begin to take action on draft resolutions submitted on all disarmament and international security agenda items.

I received a request today from countries of the European Union to postpone that phase of our work from tomorrow, Friday, to Monday, 11 November, in order to provide delegations with an opportunity to hold additional consultations on the draft resolutions. I have held consultations with the Secretariat and with members of the Bureau, and I should like to ask the members of the Committee to consider this postponement. We would thus begin to take action on draft resolutions in cluster 1 on Monday, 11 November.

In that connection, I should like to recall that, in accordance with the agreed schedule, we have 10 meetings

allocated for that phase of our work. With the proposed postponement, the Committee would have only eight meetings for taking action, which of course means intensive work.

I invite the views of the members of the Committee on this matter.

If there are no speakers and no other proposals, I shall take it that the Committee agrees to the proposed change in the schedule.

It was so decided.

The Chairman *(interpretation from Russian)*: I should like to recall that on Monday, we shall begin action on draft resolutions contained in cluster 1, "Nuclear weapons"; namely draft resolutions

(*spoke in English*)

A/C.1/51/L.3, L.4, L.6, L.9, L.17, L.19/Rev.1, L.21, L.23, L.27, L.28, L.30, L.37, L.39 and L.45. If time permits, the Committee will then proceed to take action on draft resolutions contained in cluster 2, "Other weapons of mass destruction", namely draft resolutions A/C.1/51/L.2, L.24, L.36, L.41, L.48 and L.49.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.